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Memoir.

Memoir.

J. ARROWSMITH,
Printer,
QUAY STREET, BRISTOL.

MEMOIR

OF THE

REV. THOMAS MADGE,

LATE MINISTER

OF

ESSEX STREET CHAPEL, LONDON.

BY

The Rev. WILLIAM JAMES.

LONDON:
LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.
1871.

210. g. 123.

TO

Mrs. MADGE

THIS VOLUME IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

BY HER SINCERE FRIEND,

William James.

PREFACE.

THE following Memoir has been written at the desire of many friends who wished to possess a record of the life and labours of one whom they loved and revered, and who was so much admired in his day and generation. It was a life neither diversified nor eventful,—but exemplary and useful. Mr. MADGE was not a leader in Unitarian activity, nor was he conspicuous in any of the great religious and philanthropic movements by which his times were characterized. But few men, it will be seen, have been more valued in the office which he so long held as a Christian Teacher; and as an author he was known and appre-

ciated beyond the body with which he was connected by theological sympathies, and denominational relations.

I can hardly venture to hope that the Memoir will transmit perfectly the portrait which the charm of his character has left. But it has been my aim to give a faithful representation of his mental and moral qualities, his opinions, his preaching, the social position he sustained, and the influence he exerted. This has been done, as far as possible, by his own letters, and by quotations from his sermons and addresses in the course of his ministry. And the various contributions of friends, and the printed reports of his services to which reference has been made, or from which extracts have been given, will shew the impression which he made upon others, and the estimation in which he was generally held.

I have been greatly aided by many to whom I am indebted for valuable help and advice. But especially are my thanks due to Mrs. MADGE, the Rev. JOHN KENRICK, FRANCIS SHUTE, Esq., of Exeter, J. WITHERS DOWSON, Esq., of Norwich; and to PHILIP WORSLEY, Esq., who was for many years a member of the congregation worshipping in Essex Street Chapel.

A portion of the Memoir first appeared in the pages of the *Inquirer*. This has been incorporated, for the most part, with the present work. The volume is much larger than was intended. But I have carefully selected from the materials placed in my hands such only as seemed best adapted to my purpose. The book has been prepared amid frequent interruptions, and many public and private calls upon my attention that could not be properly neglected. But it has been a labour of love,

J. ARROWSMITH,
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with Rev. ROBERT WALPOLE. Activity at Norwich. Ardour as a Politician. First visit to London. Anecdote of Yorkshire woman. Formation of Eastern Unitarian Society. Sermon in London before supporters of Unitarian Fund. Sermons at Norwich on Religious Liberty, and on the Death of Princess CHARLOTTE. Letter of Mrs. CAPPE. His marriage. Letters on the nature and duration of future punishment. Sermon on Death of Sir S. ROMILLY. Visit to Bath. Sermons on Death of GEORGE III., and on opening of Chapel at Diss. Views on Lay-preaching. Introduction to WORDSWORTH. Invitation to Paradise Street Chapel, Liverpool. Transient and protracted Pastoral Settlements. Call to London. Resignation of his office at the Octagon Chapel. Letter signed by the Deacons on behalf of Norwich Congregation.

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MEMOIR

OF THE

Rev. THOMAS MADGE.

CHAPTER I.

EARLY LIFE AND EDUCATION.

THE professional life of a Christian minister who devotes himself chiefly to the discharge of the duties connected with his office will, ordinarily, present but little in the way of striking incident, important as may have been the position which he occupied, and much as his teaching has been valued by those for whom he has thought, prayed and laboured. His work, whether in the study, or the pulpit, or the pastoral walk, or the instruction of the young, is not of a kind to afford materials for the biographer, which will be very varied or exciting in their character. He may have been successful as a preacher, received gladly

as a spiritual guide and counsellor, gratefully welcomed in the house of mourning, and by the bed of sickness, and his presence may have given deeper and purer joy to hours of brightness, and comfort and support unspeakable in times of trouble, affliction and anxiety. But these are services which are usually known only to those for whose benefit they are called forth, and their results can be fully traced by the eye of God alone, and are realised in the hearts that have been cheered and consoled by them. The career of the Rev. THOMAS MADGE forms no exception to the common course of events in this particular. But the station he filled, the reputation he gained, the esteem in which he was held by his contemporaries, and the love and veneration with which he was regarded by his friends, will give an interest, it is thought, to the history of what he was and what he did. To record it reverently and faithfully is a tribute of respect and affection which is due to his memory.

THOMAS MADGE was born at Plymouth in the year 1786. But little is known of his childhood. His father died when he was quite young; and he was then taken from his mother, and adopted by a relative, THOMAS HUGO, Esq., of Crediton, who was well-known

and much valued as a medical man in the neighbourhood. Crediton is almost in the centre of Devonshire, and situated near the river Creedy. The air, it is said, is most salubrious. It is an ancient place, and is supposed to have been of considerable importance even in Saxon times. Before the removal of the See to Exeter it was the residence of the Bishop of the Diocese, but no part of the old Cathedral remains. Formerly there were large serge and woollen manufactories here,—but the trade has now fallen into decay. The town lies between two hills and presents an image of tranquil beauty, which it is pleasant to behold. A child's mind is not unfrequently permanently affected by the scenes with which it is surrounded, and it is not at all improbable that the objects which daily met his eye in his boyhood, inspired Mr. MADGE with that ardent love of nature by which he was characterized. In the house of Mr. HUGO he was at once looked upon as one of its dearest inmates; and being a bright and intelligent boy, of great promise, he was sent early to the Grammar School in Crediton, of which the Rev. NICHOLAS LIGHTFOOT was the master. It was founded by King EDWARD VI., in 1547,

and chartered by Queen ELIZABETH in 1560. Mr. LIGHTFOOT was a man of learning and a good teacher. The school flourished greatly under his direction, and he was at the head of it for thirty-two years. His eldest son, Dr. JOHN PRIDEAUX LIGHTFOOT, is now Rector of Exeter College, Oxford.

The friends of Mr. MADGE's youth had, with few exceptions, departed before him. But one of his schoolfellows, FRANCIS SHUTE, Esq., still survives. He is now residing at Exeter, and retains a lively recollection of the companionship which was so genial more than seventy years ago, and has kindly sent me the following particulars of the happy days when they were at school together.

"THOMAS MADGE continued at the Grammar School five years, and was distinguished by a universal genius, doing whatever he did well, being always at the head of his class, carrying off the prizes, and regarded as the admired and beloved leader in all our recreations. In the beginning of 1803, by his own wish, and Mr. HUGO's desire, he entered the surgery, with a view to the medical profession, in which, had he remained, he would have had good prospects. Occasionally he attended the Unitarian Chapel with me and my brother

STEPHEN. Mr. HUGO was a liberal churchman, and had no objection to this. In the summer of the same year, 1803, the Rev. JOHN ROWE, one of the ministers of Lewin's Mead Chapel, Bristol, came to Spencecombe, near Crediton, on a visit to his mother, and preached in the Bowden Hill Chapel. Young MADGE heard him with great delight, and communed with him freely during his stay. The conversation of his youthful friends, free access to my father's library, and the worship in which he sometimes joined with us, must have prepared his mind to appreciate Mr. ROWE's teaching. And, under its influence, he was led to give up the profession for which he was designed, and resolved that he would prepare himself for the work of the ministry amongst Unitarian Christians."

It is interesting to be made acquainted with the circumstances under which Mr. MADGE embraced the faith of which he became the zealous and unwavering advocate. Mr. ROWE, to whose services in the pulpit his conversion is ascribed, was a most impressive preacher, and an earnest and decided Unitarian. The formation of the Western Unitarian Book Society, and its annual meetings, held in various parts of the West, at which the most

eminent ministers of the body were heard, and the discussion which ensued, must have also directed Mr. MADGE'S attention to the subject of Unitarianism. But he never said much of the causes which produced the change in his views, important as it was to him, and great as was its effect upon his mind and character, and the whole subsequent course of his life. He was brought up in the belief of the creeds of the Church of England. At the proper age he was confirmed; and often was he heard to say the Bishop's hand had been upon his head. He had no other inducement than that which arose from sincere conviction to leave the worship to which he had been accustomed, to whose forms he never ceased to be attached, and for whose services the beloved relative who was to him as a father had an unquestionable preference. But, having carefully considered the subject, and, after serious and impartial enquiry, satisfied himself that Unitarianism accorded with the pure gospel, nothing could induce him to conceal what he thought. Openness and candour were, throughout his career, striking features in Mr. MADGE'S character. His outward behaviour was always in conformity

with his inward sentiments and feelings, and never was there seen in any man a more transparent simplicity. No sooner, therefore, did he find that his opinions were in harmony with those of Unitarian believers, than he determined to unite with them in religious communion. Such a resolution could not have been formed without much trial, for he was well aware that it would be painful to Mr. HUGO, who so affectionately regarded him, and to whom he was not slow to acknowledge his filial gratitude and obligations. He was not ignorant of the persecution and intolerance to which the sect he was about to join was exposed; for at that time the differences between Unitarians and Trinitarians were freely discussed in Devonshire, and a controversy had not long before arisen, which occasioned considerable strife and bitterness. He could not without sorrow have left the Church into which he was received by baptism in his infancy, and with which all whom he most loved were connected. But he was summoned, he believed, by a voice whose call he was bound to obey; and young as he was he did not hesitate, and was content to leave the issue with God. Nor was it enough for

him to be associated with Unitarians in Christian fellowship. He was soon conscious of a desire, that could not be suppressed, of qualifying himself for the ministry among them. This was a fresh, and a very sad disappointment to Mr. HUGO. He had looked forward in the hope of being assisted by his young relative in his own profession, and feared that the course he proposed to take would be fatal to his worldly advantage. By argument and persuasion he endeavoured to turn him from his purpose, but without effect. And to Mr. HUGO's honour it should be recorded, that though the step contemplated was one which he could not approve, he generously aided Mr. MADGE in carrying out the object on which his heart was set, and never for a moment withdrew from him his love or his confidence. His house at Crediton was still Mr. MADGE'S home, and the most cordial relations were kept up between them. Mr. HUGO was an amiable and a gentlemanly man, and did not allow theological or political differences to interfere with the claims of higher duties. As long as he lived, he corresponded regularly with his adopted son; and in the last letter which he wrote to him, he congratulated him heartily

on his success as a preacher, and expressed towards him sincere and unabated attachment.

When it was finally determined that Mr. MADGE should be trained for the Christian ministry, arrangements were made for his reception into an academical institution which had been established in 1799, after the dissolution of Hackney College, by the Rev. TIMOTHY KENRICK, then co-pastor of the two united congregations of Protestant Dissenters in the city of Exeter. Some of the students were designed for commercial and other pursuits; but the institution was intended chiefly to provide a succession of ministers for the churches whose sympathies were with liberal Christianity in the West of England. In this academy Mr. KENRICK was the Principal. He was an able and accomplished divine, and distinguished by his varied and solid attainments. His favourite employment is said to have been the interpretation of the Scriptures; and an exposition of the historical writings of the New Testament, with reflections subjoined to each section, published after his death, afforded abundant evidence of the diligent attention,

and the sound judgment with which he applied himself to this work, and of his admirable fitness for it. Whether regarded as a theologian, or as an enlightened and earnest advocate of truth, he filled a conspicuous place in his day and generation; and his zeal, energy, and fearlessness, and his aversion to all dishonourable concealment and accommodation with respect to Christian doctrine, inspired others with courage and manly independence whilst he was with them, and gave him an influence which is still gratefully remembered. Mr. KENRICK succeeded the venerable MICAIJAH TOWGOOD, of Exeter, who attained deserved eminence, and considerable repute, both from his eloquence and power as a preacher, and his labours as an author, especially in vindication of religious liberty. He had resigned his office in the eighty-second year of his age, and after more than sixty years of service. His name is revered even now by all who are familiar with the history of English Nonconformity, and his Letters on Dissent contain perhaps the most complete and unanswerable argument against ecclesiastical impositions, and priestly pretensions, and the claims of church authority, that

has ever been produced.* Mr. KENRICK was peculiarly adapted to occupy the post from which this veteran champion of Christian freedom had retired, and in opening his house at Exeter, for the purpose of educating young men for the ministry and other learned professions, as well as for civil life, he entered upon an undertaking in which his predecessor had, also, at one period, been engaged.

In the seminary over which he presided Mr. KENRICK was so fortunate as to secure the coöperation of the Rev. JOSEPH BRETLAND, a fine scholar, and an eminently good man. They had been connected as colleagues for a short time in the ministry at George's Meeting-house, but Mr. BRETLAND had now relinquished the stated duties of the pulpit, and his calm philosophic mind, and great classical and mathematical attainments, admirably qualified him for the special departments in the academy which he was requested to

* These letters were written in reply to a series of letters by the Rev. JOHN WHITE, vicar of Ospring, addressed to a gentleman dissenting from the Church of England, in which a charge of schism was brought against Nonconformists. TOWGOOD'S work, after more than a century, is still a standard book on the subject to which it relates, and his name will always be one of the most honourable in the literature of the Free Churches of England.

undertake. Favoured with such training the students must have had very great advantages, and Mr. MADGE could hardly have begun his preparation for his sacred vocation under more promising auspices. He was about eighteen years old when he was received into the Exeter academy, in the autumn of 1803, and he had the privilege of boarding with Mr. KENRICK, in whose family most of the young men resided. One only of his fellow-students now remains, the Rev. JOHN KENRICK, M.A., of York, whose learning and reputation have shed a lustre on the denomination with which he has from youth to age been prominently identified. The friendship which then commenced, was never interrupted, and they always met with kindly feelings and mutual esteem. Another, with whom Mr. MADGE studied at Exeter, deserves to be mentioned for his talents, and the zeal with which he laboured as a Christian teacher — the Rev. JOHN JAMES, of Gellionen, near Swansea. He was designated the Apostle of Unitarianism in South Wales, and was remarkable for the eloquence and fervour of his preaching in his native language. For many years

he added the duties of a school to those of the pulpit, and the present Lord Justice JAMES was one of his pupils.

For a few months only was Mr. MADGE permitted to enjoy the benefit of the Rev. TIMOTHY KENRICK'S tuition. In the summer of 1804, whilst on a visit to his friends in Denbighshire, during the vacation, he was suddenly cut off in the midst of his usefulness. His loss was widely and deeply felt; and no one out of the circle of his nearest relatives more sincerely mourned his departure than Mr. MADGE. He never forgot his obligations to him. And short as was the period during which he was under his care, there can be no doubt that Mr. MADGE'S devotion to Unitarianism was very largely owing to the direction which was given to his inquiries by Mr. KENRICK, and to the spirit which he imbibed from the example and instruction of his tutor. The Exeter Academy was not immediately broken up by Mr. KENRICK'S death. Some of the students continued, and among them was Mr. MADGE. It was carried on under the superintendence of Mr. BRETLAND, and an effort was made to obtain a suitable resident Principal. The attempt however failed, and

it was resolved at a general meeting of the society, by whose zeal and liberality the institution was supported, held in February, 1805, that it should cease to be carried on in Exeter, "from Lady-day next, until there appears a favourable opportunity of opening an academy again, either here, or in some other place in the West of England." That opportunity did not arise, and the library and trust-fund attached to it, were subsequently applied to the use of Manchester New College.*

In the autumn of 1805, Mr. MADGE was transferred from the Exeter Academy to the College at York, which had been removed from Manchester two years before, that it might be placed under the superintendence of the Rev. CHARLES WELLBELOVED, whose rare qualifications for his position were proved by the constant succession of well-furnished ministers, ripe scholars, and effective

* The Rev. HENRY ACTON, one of the ministers of George's Meeting, Exeter, from 1823 to 1843,—when, like his predecessor, Mr. KENRICK, he was suddenly taken from his family and flock,—for a few years received young men into his house, who were educated for the ministry under his care; and there were those who desired that an effort should again be made to establish an academy permanently in Exeter, and were prepared to support it liberally, but as it was not thought to be practicable by others, nothing was done. Mr. ACTON was a man of great talent, and remarkable for his ability and eloquence as an extempore preacher.

preachers, with which the English Presbyterian and Unitarian churches were supplied during his long term of office.

Mr. MADGE continued four years at York. And the time of his residence there is considered by one who has had the best means of forming a sound judgement on this subject the most satisfactory, as regards the relation of the students to one another, and to the tutors, of any in the annals of the College.

"From 1803 to 1811," writes the Rev. JOHN KENRICK, "as there were no separate buildings allotted to the College the students were lodged either in Mr. WELLBELOVED'S own house, which, however, could only accommodate a small part of them, or in lodgings in the neighbourhood. Meals were taken in his house, and lectures delivered in a room which had been built contiguously to his former school-room, now appropriated to the library, which had been removed from Warrington to Manchester, and from Manchester to York. The inconvenience of this place was not felt while the number of students was small, but became very perceptible as it increased. Yet, notwithstanding the encroachment made upon the privacy of his

family, I believe that, after the two first years were past, he felt himself more at ease, and enjoyed more the relation between himself and his pupils, than at any susequent period. Meeting at meal-times without the restraints of the class-room, and in numbers not exceeding that of a large family, there was an opportunity for familiar conversation, especially in the evening, and the cultivation of a feeling of personal friendship, such as was scarcely possible under the system subsequently introduced, and with increased numbers. When I mention the names of MADGE, HUNTER, ASTLEY, ROBBERDS, WILLIAM TURNER, YATES, and HINCKS, among those who were students in this first stage of the College, it will be readily understood that the pleasant and improving intercourse of the tutor and his pupils would produce the affection and esteem which prevailed between them throughout after-life."*

Such were the favourable circumstances under which Mr. MADGE was placed at York. To his residence there, and to the advantages, mental and social, which he derived from it, he always looked back with thankfulness.

* Memoir of Rev. CHARLES WELLBELOVED. By the Rev. JOHN KENRICK, M.A., F.S.A.—Pp. 94-5.

Mr. WELLBELOVED was assisted in his various and important duties, during Mr. MADGE'S College course, first, by Mr. HUGH KERR, of Glasgow College, and a member of the Scottish Church,* who was an efficient classical and mathematical teacher; and, afterwards, by the Rev. THEOPHILUS BROWNE, M.A., who had been educated at Cambridge, and a clergyman of the Church of England, but seceded and became a Unitarian minister.

In the year 1806 there is, in the Monthly Repository of Theology and General Literature, which was edited by the Rev. ROBERT ASPLAND, of Hackney, a letter from Mr. MADGE, written at York, with a view to point out that the want of zeal in Unitarians was the real cause of the slow growth of their principles. It was probably his first published composition, and it will be read with much interest on this account; but it shows, too,

* Before accepting the invitation to York, the assistant tutor naturally wished to know whether there would be any restrictions on his religious sentiments. Mr. WELLBELOVED wrote in reply, that respecting his opinions neither the Trustees of the College nor himself would make any inquiry. He adds, "You are informed, no doubt, that I am in the strictest sense of the word a Unitarian, and all that I should expect from a colleague who is engaged as Classical Tutor, is what his own good sense would point out as proper; that if he should have occasion to illustrate philologically any passage in the Scriptures, he would carefully avoid dogmatic theology.—MEMOIR OF WELLBELOVED, p. 87.

how earnestly he desired, even as a student, the wider spread of the Unitarian faith.

"Much has lately been said upon the popularity of Calvinism, and the opposite state of the Unitarian doctrine. It cannot be denied that the causes which operate in favour of the former are neither few nor inconsiderable in their weight; but to account for the popularity of Calvinism is not, I conceive, sufficient to account for the unpopularity of Unitarianism. We must seek some other cause; and this cause, I think, will be discovered in that disinclination to zealous, active, and well-combined efforts, which is so strikingly characteristic of the Unitarians as a body. Almost the only thing that has been done by them is the institution of societies for diffusing the knowledge of the Scriptures by the distribution of books. The Unitarians do not expect supernatural assistance: they do not believe that the Almighty will deviate from the general course of his providence, by dispensing with human means. To what, therefore, are they to look for the general diffusion and final establishment of their principles, but to their own exertions? I do not contend for irregulated, uncharitable zeal, or for that which is not founded upon enlightened and liberal knowledge. I am no advocate for the wild enthusiasm of the fanatic, or the dogmatical denunciation of the Athanasian: all I contend for is a steady, consistent, and strenuous exertion in behalf of the glorious cause of truth, without partaking either of the rude and vulgar cant of the one, or the damnatory and impudent asseverations of the other: but when I look around me and see what the Unitarians are about, I am astonished that, with the great and glorious truths of which they are in possession, they should in general be so little concerned

for their promulgation; and, instead of inquiring why Unitarianism is not more generally believed and professed, I am rather at a loss to account for the progress which it has already made."

He proceeds to give two or three instances in which adequate support to institutions having for their object the furtherance of Unitarianism was not afforded, and, then, asks,—

"What justification can there be offered for those who, having it so easily in their power, omit to do good, and neglect to advance the cause of truth, of virtue, and of God? It is truly lamentable, and to serious, well-disposed, and considerate minds, it must often be the subject of their silent meditations, that so little regard should be paid to the interests of religion, while they behold so much zeal shewn for those things which are merely temporal. For the attainment of an object of comparative insignificance, we shall see men employing all their powers, and grudging no expense in its behalf; and yet, when they are called upon to promote the greatest and most weighty of all concerns, how indifferent and unmoved do they appear! * * *

"T. M."

The Unitarians of England have been prevented by their desire for freedom, and their love of independent thought, and individual action, from securing the energy and power for the propagation of their religious opinions which are seen in other churches. The want of that kind of zeal of which Mr. MADGE

complained when he was a student, still exists, and there is even less prospect now of the united effort which he urged for the promotion of denominational objects, than when the stirring appeal which he sent forth was written.

Mr. MADGE was not what would be designated a hard student, and his temperament always inclined him more to action than to reading. He never had any profound knowledge of languages, and philology was less to his taste than metaphysics, morals, and politics. In the latter he took a very lively concern, and threw himself into them, with all his characteristic ardour, I am told by one who knew him well, even when still *in statu pupillari.* In the year 1807, the dismissal of the Whig ministry excited most determined conflicts at the election which followed. The city and county of York were vehemently contested, and in both struggles Mr. MADGE was busily engaged, haranguing large assemblages, mustering voters, and bringing them in triumph to the poll. The parties who strove for the county representation were Mr. WILBERFORCE, (the eloquent and uncompromising opponent of slavery), Lord MILTON, and the Hon. HENRY

LASCELLES. The contest lay between the two last, Mr. WILBERFORCE being professedly neutral, and sure, indeed, of his re-election. But there was a virtual though unavowed coalition between his friends and those of Mr. LASCELLES, which rendered it necessary for LORD MILTON'S supporters to canvass for plumpers; and only the most active exertions, and a very lavish expenditure, could have enabled them to succeed. A friend, who remembers this election, in writing to me, observes:—"By expenditure, I do not mean bribery; but think what must have been the cost of bringing voters from the borders of Lancashire, Derbyshire, and Durham, to York, and keeping them there, and on the road. The contest for the city, in which Mr. MADGE tried his prentice-hand, preceded that for the county. The opponents were Sir MARK M. SYKES, and Mr. DUNDAS (first Lord ZETLAND), who was elected." Lord MILTON, after he had won the prize for which he bravely fought, informed Mr. MADGE that he perfectly understood how untiring and valuable the exertions were which had been made by him on his behalf. They were both at the outset of their career; and the young nobleman was naturally interested in the

youthful student who had shown so much devotion to his cause. He was, of course, aware of Mr. MADGE's position in York College. And in thanking him for what he had done, LORD MILTON remarked how happy it would have made him, had Mr. MADGE's destiny been the ministry of the Church of England, to secure the preferment of one to whom he owed so much. As Earl FITZWILLIAM, his father, was the patron of twenty-six livings, there would have been no difficulty in the fulfilment of a desire of this kind, and we may well believe that if Mr. MADGE had shown an inclination to conform, any promise of advancement given him would have been gladly and gratefully performed. With such patronage, and his own powers, imagination pictures what might have been the promotion within the reach of the non-conforming pastor had he taken orders in the establishment, and sees him a richly beneficed clergyman, or a dignitary surrounded with wealth and worldly distinction. But his choice had been made, and he was not to be moved from it by any temporal consideration; and we rejoice in the fidelity to principle which he maintained. Lord MILTON and Mr. MADGE did not meet again until

they were old men, when Lady ZETLAND brought them together in London. Lord MILTON was then Earl FITZWILLIAM. As he cordially took Mr. MADGE'S hand, he mentioned the day and the hour of their last interview at York; and they conversed pleasantly on the changes which had transpired in the years that had gone, and of the progress and improvement which it had been their happiness to witness.

Mr. MADGE left College in 1809, and notwithstanding the distractions to which reference has been made, and which were certainly not favourable to quiet study, he had qualified himself for undertaking the solemn responsibilities of the Christian ministry, and gained the respect and confidence of his tutors, and the sincere regard of his fellow-students. Among his friends were some of the most estimable in the College Roll—men who afterwards brought the highest honour to their Alma Mater — JOHN GOOCH ROBBERDS, JOSEPH HUNTER, WILLIAM TURNER, and JAMES YATES — now the sole survivor of those at York with whom he was associated.

Mr. ROBBERDS entered the College at the same time with Mr. MADGE, and they left

together. They were warmly attached to each other, though their tastes and temperaments were in striking contrast. Mr. Robberds disliked agitation and excitement, and confined himself to the discharge of his professional duties, and enjoyed most the quiet and holy thought which is the best preparation for them. He was a good scholar, and a very impressive preacher. On the completion of his academic course, he was invited to Manchester as one of the pastors of Cross Street Chapel. This invitation he accepted, and from the influential society with which he commenced his public life he never removed. His career was one of eminent usefulness, and he had the happiness of serving the same people in an unbroken ministry of forty-three years.

Mr. Hunter did not leave York until a year after Mr. Madge. He settled at Bath, and remained there, much respected for his learning and character, until 1833, when he retired from the ministry, and entered on the office of Commissioner of Public Records, for which his antiquarian researches peculiarly qualified him. He was a man of studious and reserved habits, but of much personal dignity, and very courteous manners. To

those who knew him well, he was a most agreeable and instructive companion, and full of information concerning Puritan times, which he was always pleased to communicate to such as were really interested in the subject. He was the author of several works, and to him we are indebted for that charming book, The Life of Oliver Heywood, which contains a beautiful record of the rise of the Old Dissent.

WILLIAM TURNER, the third of Mr. MADGE's friends at York, belonged to a family of great excellence, which had furnished able and faithful ministers, it is said, to the church, from the commencement of Protestant Nonconformity. He was himself worthy of his noble religious ancestry. A more amiable and simple-minded man, I should think, never lived; but he was also a man of culture and fine reasoning powers. On quitting York, he spent a session at Edinburgh, and was then appointed to the chair of mathematics and philosophy in his old college. He afterwards became the resident tutor at York, and retained this post till 1827,—labouring zealously, conscientiously and kindly, as was stated when he retired from it, to promote the moral and intellectual improvement of the students. He then

became minister of the Northgate End Chapel, Halifax, in which connexion he remained until his death, in 1854.

Mr. YATES was but one session at York with Mr. MADGE. For many years he has given up the ministry. But his services to the cause of religious truth have been very valuable, and his vindication of Unitarianism, in reply to Dr. WARDLAW's Discourses on the Socinian Controversy, is one of the most complete, powerful, and convincing works that we possess in support and defence of Unitarian Christianity.

What influence these fellow-students and friends of Mr. MADGE's college life may have had upon his mind and character, it would be impossible now to say. It is, however, a striking fact that they all acquired distinction as writers or preachers, and have been held in high estimation even beyond their own church, for their talents, virtues, and acquirements.

Among the advantages which he enjoyed at York, the friendship of the venerable Mrs. CAPPE must not be overlooked. She was the widow of the Rev. NEWCOME CAPPE, who had been for many years the minister of St. Saviourgate Chapel, in this city, and a

man of superior qualities and attainments. She took a warm interest in all the students, and appreciated Mr. MADGE's abilities, and admired his ardour and earnestness. Her age, her power of mind, her character, and the suavity of her manners, gave at the same time a weight to those counsels of prudence and moderation which she imparted, and which her young friend occasionally needed. Mr. MADGE always gratefully recollected her truly maternal kindness.

CHAPTER II.

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MINISTRY AT BURY ST. EDMUNDS.

THE MADGE'S first pastoral charge was at Bury St. Edmunds. I have before me the letter of invitation signed by thirty-five members of the congregation, in which they state that, after mature consideration, they have "come to a unanimous resolution" to request him to become their minister, feeling confident that his moral and intellectual qualities eminently fitted him for the office; and observing as they had done with pleasure, that with enlarged and rational views of Christian doctrine, he had evinced a solicitude for the religious improvement of the character, without which the purest profession is but vain!

The invitation thus unanimously given was conditionally accepted, and he always spoke with pleasure of his connexion with

CHURCHGATE STREET CHAPEL, BURY ST. EDMUNDS.

this religious society. With a few pleasant and intelligent families belonging to his flock he had congenial intercourse, and his audience on the Sunday, though small, consisted of thoughtful and well-informed persons. But he did not propose to settle permanently at Bury, and thought it best that his engagement with the congregation should be regarded as a temporary one, and that he should be considered as supplying the pulpit only as long as might be mutually convenient and agreeable. With this understanding, he went in the beginning of the year 1810 to Bury. There, he became acquainted with HENRY CRABB ROBINSON, whose friends and relatives were inhabitants of the town, and members of the Churchgate Street Chapel, and the intimacy was renewed when Mr. MADGE came to London, and continued unbroken to the end of Mr. ROBINSON'S earthly existence. In his Diary and Reminiscences* recently published, there are interesting allusions to his parents and others, which enable us to form a tolerably correct idea of the social position, the mental culture, and the religious character and habits of

* Edited by the Rev. Dr. SADLER.—Vol. 1, pp. 6, 7.

those to whom Mr. MADGE first ministered. We learn from Mr. ROBINSON'S account of the home of his youth, how strictly the Sabbath was kept, how regularly attendance twice "at meeting" was given, how constantly domestic worship was observed, and how carefully parental discipline and instruction were then directed to the Christian education of children. It may seem to us now that, in pursuing this end, too much restraint was sometimes imposed upon the young. But seldom did those brought up in our old English Presbyterian households depart from the way in which they had been taught to go, and it was an unspeakable advantage that memories of holy thoughts and deeds were associated with their earliest and fondest recollections.

Mr. ROBINSON describes one of Mr. MADGE'S predecessors at Bury, the Rev. WILLIAM LINCOLNE, as "a gentlemanly person who inspired respect, especially by a very large white wig;" and in referring to the manner in which he was welcomed at his father's house, indicates the great reverence with which it was customary to regard the office of a Christian minister among dissenters, of the class to which he belonged,

in his boyhood. It was indeed carefully cherished and universally observed. I well remember hearing a very old lady once say that, when the Rev. JOB ORTON* passed from the vestry into the chapel, at Shrewsbury, the people invariably rose to receive him, and stood until he had taken his place in the pulpit. These mere outward marks of respect for the clerical profession are not now seen in the Unitarian body. No sacredness is attached to a minister's vocation, to give it sanctity or dignity, independent of the personal qualities of him who enters upon it. But when his character and services are worthy of the position he fills, and such as become an ambassador for Christ, there is no church, as Mr. MADGE's experience abundantly proves, in which an able and faithful Christian teacher will secure a warmer and more enduring affection and confidence.

There does not appear to have been any special religious service when Mr. MADGE commenced his ministry at Bury. The ceremony of ordination, as once practised,

* His name, with that of Dr. DODDRIDGE, was intimately blended with the history and proceedings of Dissenters in the early part of the last century.

had then been very much laid aside by Unitarians, because it seemed to sanction the erroneous impression that some spiritual authority was communicated from those by whom it was performed. In the address delivered to the students at York, after the college examination in 1809, when Mr. MADGE left the institution, the Rev. WILLIAM TURNER, of Newcastle, laments the disuse of such a service, and points out its value and appropriateness. Rightly conducted, it certainly affords a suitable opportunity for speaking of the reciprocal duties of pastor and people, and for brethren and friends to gather round a young minister, and to implore for him the blessing of God. The occasion is one which naturally awakens sympathy and hope, and when accompanied by suitable religious solemnities, and looked upon simply as the introduction of a pastor to his work, who is not to be a lord over God's heritage, but "an ensample to the flock," it may well be expected to promote circumspection and diligence in the Christian ministry, and perhaps to add to its dignity and strength. But Mr. MADGE had always a strong aversion to anything like priestly pretension, and from a letter written with express reference

to Mr. TURNER'S remarks, we learn that he was not quite satisfied with what had been advanced on this subject. "There will therefore be no censure conveyed," he says, upon the address at York, "if a remark be made that a clear and definite idea should be conveyed of what kind of ordination seems to him, and to enlightened Christians in general, most congenial with our duties as Protestant dissenters, and our obligations as Christians. It would surely be granted that we are to shun the appearance of exercising powers which we do not possess, whilst we would impress those most concerned in the interesting connexion that subsists between a religious society and him whom they appoint to conduct their devotional services. How this is to be effected, taking Scripture for our guide, and general good for the object in view, is," he adds, "the investigation of one who is ever solicitous to be a searcher after truth." The useful influence of the service, as it is now generally observed in Unitarian churches, he did not deny, but I am not aware that he ever took any part in it. The best way of magnifying the ministry he, to the last, felt, is by faithfulness in the performance of its duties.

And of the soundness of this view there will be no difference of opinion.

Mr. MADGE'S ministry at Bury terminated before the second year had expired. The only record of it that I have seen, is a sermon which he preached on the importance of education to the poor, and which was printed in compliance with the wishes of a few friends, but not published. This discourse was from the words of Christ, in Matthew xxv., 40, "And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." It was a powerful plea for more and better instruction for the humbler classes. It has not the finish of his later compositions, but there are in it passages of much beauty and power, and such as were likely to move a popular audience. Sixty years ago, when the discourse was delivered, the friends of education had to contend against prejudice and bigotry in various forms. They sowed, and we reap, after a long period, the fruit of their labours. No uncertain sound did Mr. MADGE send forth, when he urged that to every poor child in the kingdom should a sound and

suitable culture be given, as the best means of preservation from folly and vice,—from infamy, irreligion, and impiety. He observes :

"The advocates of spiritual tyranny, and the enemies to civil freedom, those who wish to see the human mind the sport of visions and dreams, appalled and affrighted by spectres of its own creation, and invested on all sides by the trammels of blind submission, and implicit credulity, may tremble at the idea of imparting light and knowledge to the minds of the poor; by which they may be able to break in pieces the chains which bind them to their parent earth, by which they may be able to soar above flesh and sense, and take their place in the intellectual and moral firmament, where they may move free and unrestrained, in the orbit marked out by the hand of God. But those who have a proper sense of the dignity of our nature, and of the worth of an immortal soul, will rejoice to see every one who bears the stamp of reason display its native excellence, assert its inalienable rights, and unfold its glorious and exalted powers. They will therefore hail with delight and admiration the growing intelligence, the increasing knowledge of the human mind; convinced that this is the best, the only substantial, and solid foundation upon which pure religion, eminent virtue, and unaffected piety, can be permanently established. He who relieves the wants of the body, who gives bread to the hungry, and provides raiment for the naked, confers only a temporary and partial benefit upon his fellow creatures; but he who fills the soul with the treasures of divine knowledge, who teaches it to aspire after those acquisitions which no accident

or misfortune can destroy, and which even time itself can only suspend, is conferring a blessing inestimable in its value, and everlasting in its effects. It is therefore a delightful, a divine occupation, to be engaged in the instruction of the ignorant, in enlightening understandings hitherto darkened by the mists of error, in teaching to glow with the love of God and the Saviour, bosoms which have never felt the influence of this blessed affection, and in raising to heaven and immortality, hopes and expectations which have never been accustomed to range beyond the narrow confines of this little transitory scene. Yes, my friends, let knowledge be diffused among all classes of society, and then all classes will be enabled to receive and feel the delightful truths of the Gospel; they will no more be subject to those impositions, which, to the disgrace of humanity, have been so long practised upon them—they will then be able of themselves to detect the approaches of imposture—they will then not be at a loss to distinguish the sweet and heavenly countenance of piety from the grisly visage of superstition, and they will no longer be hurried into blamable excesses of passion through the bugbear of a name."

In speaking of the surest foundation of national security and happiness, he points out that it is best laid in the education of the people in the principles of religion and justice. Nothing he contends is to be feared from the masses in any country when thus instructed:

"Those who have been taught the use of reason, and who have been early accustomed to exercise their

minds in the acquisition of knowledge, and in a calm and steady investigation of truth, will not be easily misled by 'the false lights of atheistical philosophy,' by the meteor glare of a gloomy fanaticism, or the funeral torch of a deadly superstition. And moreover, if such a people should be roused into opposition and resistance, by a sense of the wrongs that have been done them, and the indignities that have been offered them; it will not be to trample under foot all that is noble in man, and sacred in principle,—it will not be to spurn and set at nought the dictates of reason, humanity, and justice, and to violate the laws of their country and their God: their excesses, if any should be committed, will be light; they will soon be called back to their duty, their repentance will be speedy, and their sorrow sincere. BUT—a people whose minds have been unenlightened, and whose spirits have been untamed, when once roused from their sleep of indolence, by a strong sense of injuries done them, are carried forward with an impetuosity, which nothing can resist, to *acts of vengeance without mercy, to deeds of retribution without justice.*—Their passions, unaccustomed to restraint or control, rise to a pitch of frenzy and madness, which like a mighty torrent, rushing with accelerated velocity, sweep away every thing that seems to oppose their progress, and leave behind nothing but desolation, calamity, and blood. It therefore contributes most essentially to the welfare of a state, to have the poor in that state properly educated: they are thereby rendered better subjects, better servants, better parents, and better friends."

After urging those who heard him to open their hearts to the necessities and wants of

their poorer brethren, and as they had freely received so to freely give, he thus concludes:—

"And now, my fellow-Christians, consider the recompense of your reward. Look forward to the great day of account. Anticipate the grand and solemn scene which will then be unfolded. Behold Jesus sitting upon the throne of judgment, and yourselves waiting in tembling expectation to hear the sentence of your final doom! In these awful moments, with what rapture would you hail the appearance of those poor children, whose tender minds you had contributed to form to piety and virtue, standing before Jesus as witnesses to your works of beneficence and labours of love. How sweet would be the music of their voice as they called down Heaven's blessing upon your heads and implored the mercy of your judge! And what would be your feelings, what sensations of delight would then fill your bosoms, when you saw your Saviour rise from his throne of glory, and, pointing to those objects of your bounty, heard him exclaim, 'Inasmuch as ye did it to one of the least of these, ye have done it unto me.'"

During his ministry at Bury St. Edmunds, Mr. MADGE had the happiness to become acquainted with THOMAS CLARKSON, the founder of the Society for the abolition of the Slave-trade, whose exertions, sacrifices, and sufferings in the cause of humanity, form a sublime and beautiful page in the annals of philanthropic effort. Mr. CLARKSON married Miss CATHERINE BUCK, of Bury, who was Mr. CRABB ROBINSON'S intimate friend. He men-

tions her often in his Diary, and remarks that she was the most eloquent woman, with the exception of Madame de STAËL, that he had ever known,—possessing a quick apprehension of every kind of beauty, and making her own whatever she learned. At Bury Mr. MADGE frequently saw and conversed with her and her husband, and with his intense abhorrence of injustice and wrong, he would heartily rejoice with them on the success of the contest against the barbarous and cruel traffic in which Mr. CLARKSON had been engaged. It is to be regretted that no record of their intercourse at this period was preserved. Mr. MADGE's warmest sympathies could not but have been enlisted on behalf of the injured African in our West India islands, and he would rejoice in the new hope, which was then rising to CLARKSON'S view, and which he lived to see, in part, fulfilled,—that emancipation, like a beautiful plant, would, in due season, rise out of the ashes of the abolition of the Slave-trade, and that its seed would be sown in other lands.*

* Clarkson's History of the Abolition of the African Slave Trade.—Vol. ii., p. 586.

CHAPTER III.

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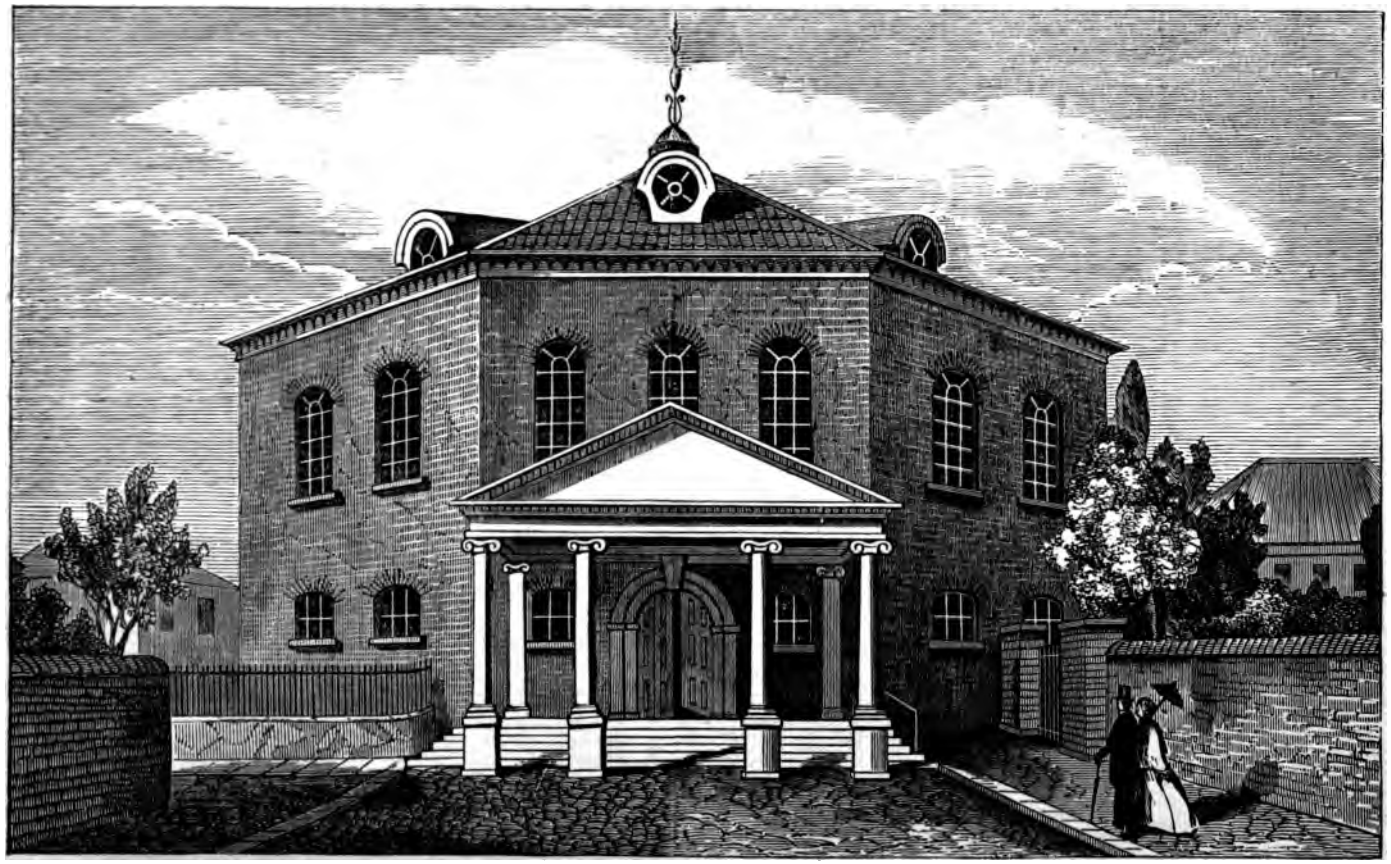
MINISTRY AT NORWICH.

IT was not probable, with his gifts and endowments, that Mr. MADGE would be permitted to continue long in a small country town; and, accordingly, we find that, in the year 1811, he was invited to Norwich, as co-pastor with the Rev. PENDLEBURY HOUGHTON, minister of the Octagon Chapel. This relation was, however, but of short continuance; and in the year following Mr. MADGE became sole pastor, on the removal of Mr. HOUGHTON to Liverpool. The removal occasioned much regret, and some dissension, in the congregation, amongst those who were more or less favourable to the Unitarian controversy.

Mr. HOUGHTON was a popular preacher, and remarkable for his "musical voice, which was capable of the nicest inflections." His theology was liberal, but he carefully excluded



THE OCTAGON CHAPEL, NORWICH.

everything of a disputable nature from his discourses. This was supposed to have arisen partly from temperament, and partly from a persuasion that, by drawing hearers of different opinions to his services, he could most successfully fulfil his pulpit duties. The same course was adopted by many of the liberal Presbyterian ministers of his day, and they did, no doubt, for a season, keep together elements that were dissimilar, and which a fearless preacher like Mr. MADGE would be sure to separate. But numbers, it has been well said, are not always strength, and when united only by the feeble bond of private influence, they are scattered when that influence is withdrawn. It was so at Norwich. Several members of the Established Church were among the hearers of Mr. HOUGHTON, who were disturbed and offended by allusions to debated points in religion by his colleague ; and they quitted the congregation when Mr. HOUGHTON left it.*

Unitarianism was first brought prominently into the pulpit at Norwich by Mr. MADGE, and it must have seriously troubled

* History of the Octagon Chapel, Norwich, by JOHN and EDWARD TAYLOR, with an Introduction by Rev. J. CROMPTON, M.A.—Pp. 57-8.

Mr. HOUGHTON, though I am assured it never interfered with the cordial feeling which subsisted between them, and that they agreed to differ in their modes of operation, with uninterrupted cordiality and kindness.

The congregation assembling in the Octagon Chapel at Norwich, when Mr. MADGE went to it, was of considerable influence, from the social position and attainments of many of its members. The city was then the abode of men and women who were well known for their literary and scientific tastes and pursuits, with whom he mingled freely in the freshness and vigour of his early manhood; and he was doubtless stimulated to greater mental effort by the recollection of what would be requisite in ministrations suited to their wants. The Rev. JOHN KENRICK expresses his conviction, in a communication which I have had from him, that Mr. MADGE'S powers as a preacher were called forth and fully developed by the demands made upon him at the Octagon Chapel. "He had there," Mr. KENRICK observes, "to address an audience perhaps the most intellectual in our denomination. It will hardly be believed by those who have been charmed by his delivery in later

years that when he was a student at Exeter, Mr. BRETLAND, himself an accomplished elocutionist, pronounced that he never would make a public speaker. The effect of his harmonious voice was impaired by a rapidity of utterance which he soon learned to correct after he became a preacher."

Mr. MADGE was himself accustomed to relate an amusing anecdote respecting this habit, which, by care and effort, he so completely surmounted. He had been officiating somewhere, in his early preaching days, and had chosen as his text, the words from the prophet Isaiah, "My people do not consider." When he left the pulpit, an elderly gentleman spoke to him of his sermon, and shaking him kindly by the hand, remarked, "My young friend, you do not give us time to consider."

From the first Mr. MADGE was much admired as a preacher at Norwich, and the views of Christianity which he held with firmness himself, and explained to others with so much clearness and reverence, were most acceptable to the great majority of his hearers.

In the year 1812 he delivered a sermon on the Salvation of Man by the Free Grace of God in Christ, which was printed at the

request of several persons who had been impressed by it, and was subsequently published as a tract, and had a large circulation. It contains a well-conducted argument for the doctrine which it was designed to support, and against the scheme of Vicarious Atonement or Satisfaction. The close of this discourse furnishes a good specimen of his style and mode of address in the pulpit, at this period of his ministry:

"What a beautiful picture, my fellow Christians, does this doctrine of the essential placability and free grace of God, exhibit of the Divine Character. Can you look upon it without feeling within you the glow of admiration and delight? Does not the sight of it warm your hearts, and call upon you to love, serve, and adore that great and good Being, whom it represents? Keep your eyes steadily fixed upon it—and if you can see nothing in it that reflects glory and honour upon God, nothing to raise the soul to heaven on the wings of divine love, I pity your condition; I pity the state of your souls; for, cold indeed must that heart be, with respect to every thing that is great and good and fair and beautiful—deadened must those feelings be with regard to every thing that is lovely and amiable, that can derive no warmth, that can receive no animation or comfort, from the contemplation of such a display of Heaven's love and Heaven's mercy to the children of men. But, let us recollect, that this description of the character of God, is not held up to our view merely to be looked at and admired, but to impress and affect our hearts, to

raise them from earthly to heavenly things, to melt them into the love of God, and to lead them into the ways of righteousness and peace.

"Some people have imagined that this doctrine tends to diminish our regard and gratitude to Christ; but why should it? Why should we cease to love the Lord Jesus Christ, because we believe that the services, which he has performed for us, were undertaken in voluntary obedience to the will of his heavenly Father? Are the blessings which he has brought us less valuable, or is his goodness less conspicuous, because we believe that he came in his Father's name, and not in his own? Christain! what hadst thou been, if Jesus Christ had not died for thee? Where would have been thy hopes of immortal glory? What wouldst thou have known of death destroyed, of the grave vanquish'd, of heaven obtained? And shall we be wanting in gratitude and affection to him, by whom, under God, these blessings have been secured to us? Oh no! the sound of the name of Jesus, will be music in the ears of every sincere and faithful disciple; and he will never be remembered by us, without the liveliest sensations of reverence, of gratitude and of affection. But, our first and highest regards are undoubtedly due to God the Father of all. Christ himself has expressly and repeatedly told us, that he came not to seek his own glory, but the glory of HIM that sent him: and he would have repelled with indignation and horror any attempt to transfer to him that homage and affection, which he has directed to be paid, solely and exclusively, to the one supreme and eternal God.

"A certain class of Christians have indeed talked of the death of Christ as if *they* were the only persons who looked upon it as the means of benefit to the human

race: but this I need scarcely say, is a most unfounded and mistaken apprehension. For, what do we consider the death of Christ to be? Is it not the great seal and confirmation of all his previous doings and sufferings? Is it not the great triumph of truth and righteousness, over all the powers of sin and darkness? Is it not a most splendid and unparalleled instance of the goodness and mercy of God? And does it not call forth from our lips the exclamation of the Apostle, *if God* FOR OUR SAKES *did not even spare his own son, will he not with him, freely give us all things.* Yes, my brethren, viewed in all its relations and consequences, it is the foundation of our faith, the charter of our privileges, and our title to immortality.

And, lastly, let it be observed, that this scripture doctrine of the free grace and mercy of God, gives no encouragement, affords not the slightest hope to that man, who persists in his wickedness; nor does it, on the one hand lead to despondency or despair; nor, on the other, does it afford any ground for arrogant presumption, or vain confidence in our own righteousness. To the sinner, it thus speaks—do not continue in your present course of folly and vice, under the shocking and dreadful delusion that you can ever be pardoned through the merits of Christ, or that you can be saved by having his righteousness transferred, or imputed to you. No; this is not the doctrine which descended from heaven. *That* teaches you, that you can have no hope of salvation, unless you repent and reform, and forsake that which you are now pursuing: if you do this, you need not despond or despair. God has promised, and his promise cannot fail, that the sincere and humble penitent will not be rejected from the throne of grace. Come to him, then, and offer him your hands and your hearts, and he

will accept and bless you. Comply with these terms, and you will receive the full benefit of his pardoning mercy. To every one, and to the best of us, it says—you have done nothing, nor can you do any thing, that will ever entitle you, on the ground of merit alone, to the blessings which God has reserved for you. When you come to him, therefore, you cannot cry 'justice, justice,' but 'mercy, mercy,'—for, all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Do what you can, O Christian, and you are still an unprofitable servant. Be humble, therefore, and do not boast of the sufficiency of your own works; but, cast yourself upon him who careth for you, and, like the publican of old, lift up your eyes to heaven, and say, 'God be merciful to me a sinner.' And then will your prayers be heard and accepted; your name will be entered on the book of Life; and to it will be affixed the seal of God's redeeming mercy."

On the 31st July, 1813, there appeared in the *Norwich Mercury*, a letter from the REV. ROBERT WALPOLE, with reference to an attack which he had made, in a Visitation Sermon, on the Improved Version of the New Testament. Indignant at the charges of artifice, evasion, and dishonesty alleged against the editors of this version, Mr. MADGE drew up an answer to these statements. He was obliged to write in great haste; and so pressed was he for time, that I have heard him say he sat up through the whole of one night in order that he might be ready for publication in

the same journal. But his reply was refused insertion; and he had no other alternative, if he would expose the misrepresentations of Mr. WALPOLE, but that of printing it in the form of a pamphlet, in which it at once appeared. It was written, as might have been expected, with much force; and as the honour of men whom he was accustomed to hold in the highest estimation had been shamefully assailed, there is a just severity in certain passages. But, amidst great provocation, he never condescends to intemperate abuse. His candid and spirited appeal produced considerable effect, and Mr. WALPOLE attempted still further to support his accusation of wilful mistranslation, unfairness, and inconsistency against the Improved Version, in a second letter addressed to Mr. MADGE. This was answered in three letters, in which he most successfully exposed the rashness and inaccuracy of his opponent. To prevent the alarm which some persons might feel at the idea of a different version of the Scriptures from that which is in general use, he collected several statements from learned Divines of the Church of England, in favour of a revised translation, which were given by way of preface to his

reply. And with great appropriateness he reminds Mr. WALPOLE of what the translators of the common version wrote when they remembered the calumny and reproach to which their labours in the same good cause would expose them. "If we shall be maligned by self-conceited brethren who run their own ways, and give liking unto nothing but what is framed by themselves, and hammered on their anvil; we may rest secure, supported within by the testimony of a good conscience, having walked the ways of simplicity and integrity, as before the Lord." Very forcibly does Mr. MADGE also point out the shameful injustice of censuring Unitarians for laudably endeavouring to present the New Testament more perfectly to the English reader, whilst the Established Church, with her great resources, was content to send forth daily, copies which, besides misrepresenting the original in many places, contain passages which are known not to be genuine Scripture. He made no attempt to hold up the Improved Version as faultless in execution, but showed that when subjected to the most careful examination and the closest criticism, the integrity and ability of those who had been engaged upon the work

must be admitted. He thus calmly rebukes the persistency with which Mr. WALPOLE scornfully employs the term "Unitarian Version":—

"This, Sir, is not the title which the work bears, and if you call it so because the editors were Unitarians, I might as well call the Common Version the Trinitarian Version because the translators were Trinitarians. The Unitarians do not receive this version as a perfect one,—in fact it does not rest its claims to notice on this ground, — but they receive it, according to its pretensions, as an *improved version*, as more perfect in expressing the sense of the original than that which is in common use. They are ready to admit that it may have faults—but if it be (as I have no hesitation in asserting it to be) a more correct version than the common one, they think themselves amply justified in the countenance which they give it. I have no wish to prolong this controversy, — but, I will not shrink from the task, if you call upon me to do it, of proving that it is fully entitled to the character which I have now given of it. Remember, however, that I do not undertake to prove that it is without errors,—I know it is not the work of an infallible being,—but if you will produce your list against the Improved Version, I will produce mine against the Common Version, and we will then see whose list is the longest."

Mr. WALPOLE was a scholar and a man of character, but he had taken up the cry which was then so general against the Unitarians of England, because a few of their

scholarly men had endeavoured to give a more correct representation of the original books of the New Testament than could be found in the common version. More than half a century has transpired since this discussion at Norwich, and still, with the large accession which has been made to the critical material which furnishes aid so valuable and trustworthy towards arriving at the *ipsissima verba* of Evangelists and Apostles, we are reading in our churches the authorised translation which, as Bishop LOWTH so long ago said, is capable of improvements in respect of the sense and accuracy of the original, great and numerous. But Mr. MADGE, ere he departed, rejoiced to see that the desire for scriptural revision, to the promotion of which he contributed in his opening ministry, had gained too firm a hold of public opinion to be further resisted, that the work was formally undertaken, and that a learned minister of his own denomination had been invited to engage in it, with prelates and clergy of the National Church, and scholars from the leading sects of Dissenters.*

* On the tenth of February in the present year, he was sufficiently vigorous to enter, with his usual interest, into the daily reports in the press of what was taking place in the

This was one of the signs of growing catholicity which gladdened the age of Mr. MADGE, and cheered him as he looked onward to the manifold indications of future progress. His manliness in defending the editors of the improved version against the calumny and reproach with which they had been assailed, made him better known, increased the public estimation in which he was held, and even won for him, when the heat of the controversy had subsided, the respect of his opponent. A pleasing incident in proof of this occurred long afterwards,

world, and it afforded him much satisfaction to learn that the following resolution, proposed by the Bishop of Winchester, and seconded by the Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol, was carried unanimously by both Houses of the Convocation of Canterbury, viz.:—"To report upon the desirableness of a revision of the Authorised Version of the Old and New Testaments, whether by marginal notes or otherwise, in all those passages where plain and clear errors, whether in the Hebrew or Greek text originally adopted by the translators, or in the translations made from the same, shall on due investigation be found to exist." He felt that such a resolution must soon lead to suitable effort in the work of revision. He saw with pleasure the admission, on high authority, that "it would not be hopeful to undertake such a truly national work as the revision of the English Bible without the coöperation of the most learned nonconformists." And notwithstanding the opposition which has been made to their being invited on equal terms to take part in it, and the discreditable attempts "to sow dissension and animosities," it is gratifying to know that "in the calm region of biblical learning, such pitiful efforts" have not been permitted to prevail.

which deserves to be mentioned. They had not seen each other for nearly thirty years, when they happened to be on the deck of the same steamer, and crossing from Southampton to the Isle of Wight. Mr. WALPOLE at once recognised Mr. MADGE, and spoke to him in the most friendly manner. And in the course of their conversation he remarked that, during the long interval since their warfare, opportunity had been afforded both for reflection and inquiry, and for the modification of opinion, and added that their meeting had been to him a real gratification.

The responsible editor of the improved version of the New Testament was the Rev. T. BELSHAM, and it has been justly designated a noble monument of his learning, zeal, and industry. The work has never been looked upon with special favour by Unitarians, and is not often found in their pulpits, nor is it used by them to any extent for devotional purposes, in private. The language of the English Bible has been so long and so completely identified with the public services of religion, and employed in the closet for exciting and strengthening pious feeling, that no version in which there is any great and unnecessary departure from it will ever take its place. But due

honour should be accorded to Mr. BELSHAM and his coadjutors, to whom we are indebted for the Improved Version.* It should not now be forgotten that it gave the public the original text, as far as it had then been recovered by the most diligent research, and careful criticism. The introduction and notes contain a vast amount of valuable information which may still be profitably studied. And one whose judgment was well worthy of respect, and entitled to be heard on such a subject, affirmed that no reader of the New Testament, learned or unlearned, could fail but through his own fault of finding in it important assistance.†

Mr. MADGE'S was a very active and energetic ministry at Norwich. Nor did he confine himself to the various and weighty duties connected with his congregation. He took a prominent part in public matters, and I have been informed that his political zeal had at one time very nearly involved him in serious trouble, during the SIDMOUTH and CASTLEREAGH administration, and that he was threatened with a criminal prosecution for a very bold speech which it had been dan-

* It was formed on the basis of Achbp. NEWCOME'S translation.
† "Monthly Repository," Feb. 1830.

gerous for him to make, and in which he openly protested against some proceeding, incompatible with the spirit of the constitution and the rights of his countrymen, which had been sanctioned by the advisers of the Crown. He saw, as he conceived, a disposition to enforce the old exploded doctrines of passive obedience and non-resistance in a new and equally dangerous shape and form, and he hesitated not to declare that such a course was contrary to the great charter of England, and not to be reconciled with the teaching of the Christian's statute-book, the New Testament.

How far it may be desirable for a minister of religion to appear in the arena of political warfare, and whether his usefulness in his profession is really promoted by it, must be left to each one for himself to determine. There are occasions when the great interests of civil and religious liberty demand the open advocacy and defence of Christian teachers, as such, and when they ought not to shrink from coming forward in their support. A minister does not cease to be a citizen. His country has a claim upon his sympathy, and whilst he prays fervently for her glory, her peace, her freedom and prosperity, he should be

ready to do all in his power to maintain and defend the rights of her children. Nor should he forget that whatever tends to advance their intellectual and moral welfare, is calculated to distinguish them among the nations for all that is a dignity and a blessing to religious and social man.

In the summer of 1811, Mr. MADGE paid his first visit to the metropolis, in which he little then imagined that so large a portion of his life was to be spent. His purpose in making the journey was to attend the annual meeting of the Unitarian Fund. This was an institution which preceded the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, and with kindred objects, but not embracing a plan so comprehensive. Its anniversaries were usually held in the Parliament Court Chapel, Artillery Lane. The preacher in 1811 was the Rev. J. GRUNDY, of Manchester. The Rev. RICHARD WRIGHT, the indefatigable Unitarian Missionary, was present, and a journal of his labours in the West of England, which had been suggested and planned by the Rev. Dr. CARPENTER, then of Exeter, was read by the secretary, and heard with much pleasure. From the chapel, the subscribers and their friends adjourned to the London Tavern,

Bishopsgate Street, where they dined, and a larger company than had ever previously attended such an assembly came together on the occasion. Mr. MADGE was one of the speakers in a discussion which arose upon a plan which was in agitation for educating students for the ministry, with a particular view to popular preaching. He said that, having been brought up at York, he could not be silent, but it was his wish that the York College and the Unitarian Fund should aid each other. Though Unitarianism was not taught as an exclusive system at York, it was frequently brought under review. The utmost freedom of enquiry was permitted to the students. This had been exemplified in himself. He had delivered an oration in the academy, maintaining sentiments contrary to those of the Divinity tutor, and the majority of the students, which had been received with perfect candour and liberality. He expressed his belief that the projected institution was needed and would be useful, and that it would not interfere with the College at York, and concluded with a handsome compliment to his tutor, Mr. WELLBELOVED, who sustained the office which he held with such distinguished ability and success.

Mr. MADGE had a deep and an immovable conviction of the adaptation of the Unitarian view of Christianity to the masses of the people. As the Gospel was heard by the poor when it was first preached, and he believed Unitarianism to be identical with the truth as taught by Jesus and his Apostles, he was persuaded that it would still find ready acceptance with the same class, if expounded in conformity with their aptitudes and wants. This had been all the more impressed upon him, perhaps, by a little incident which occurred in an obscure Yorkshire village, when he was a student, and which is worth preserving. He happened to be in company with an unlearned woman, who had never heard Unitarian preaching, nor conversed with any Unitarian, nor read any Unitarian book but the Bible. On hearing her say that she did not believe Christ to be God, he asked what had induced her to reject a doctrine so generally admitted? She replied that all the ministers with whom she had conversed had told her that she must receive this doctrine; but that she read in the New Testament that Christ prayed to God, and obeyed Him;—and that from this alone she came to the conclusion that he could not himself be the God to whom he offered prayer, and rendered obedience.

Soon after his settlement at Norwich Mr. MADGE urged that an earnest and united effort should be made for the extension of Unitarianism in the eastern district of the kingdom, and took a leading part in the formation of the Eastern Unitarian Society. The second general meeting was held at Yarmouth, and he was requested to preach on the occasion, when he chose as the theme of his discourse,—"The truth and value of the Unitarian Doctrine." He was always heard to great advantage at such anniversaries. His heart was in them, and he welcomed them as suitable opportunities for stating and defending the principles of the Unitarian faith, and causing its voice to be heard. The sermon was printed at the request of the Society. It has long been out of print, but though delivered when he was only in his twenty-eighth year, it will bear comparison with discourses which he published when he had attained eminence as a preacher. On the title-page he has inserted a quotation from WORDSWORTH—

"Jehovah! Power above all powers,
Single and one, the omnipresent God!"

And another from Bishop JEREMY TAYLOR:

"Religion is then the best, and the world will be sure to have fewer atheists and blasphemers, when

the understandings of witty men are not tempted by commanding them to believe impossible articles, and unintelligible propositions,—when we do not call that a mystery which we are not able to prove, and tempt our faith to swallow that whole which reason cannot chew."

Having endeavoured by argument and illustration to prove that the Unitarian idea of God and Christ is fitted to satisfy the mind, to interest the imagination and the heart, and to draw out all our kind and good and grateful affections, and contrasted it with so-called orthodox dogmas, he appeals directly to his audience in the following impressive words :—

"You who are now entering on the career of virtue, say which is most animating to your exertions, —which most cheering to your hopes, and encouraging to your perseverance? You who have wandered from the path of duty, and are now bewailing your unhappy deviations, tell us which is most powerful to reclaim and to quicken your returning steps. And you whose hearts are weary and heavy-laden with affliction, say, which is most efficacious in lightening the burden of your sorrows, and giving rest unto your souls."

In dealing with the objection to Unitarianism, that it takes from the sinner his chief hope and comfort, he contends that it is not possible for man to have a stronger

ground of confidence than is to be found in the promises of God, that the divine goodness, as displayed in the Gospel, shines upon us with a heavenly radiance, and that the thought of his rich, free and unpardoned mercy, comes to our souls as sunshine to a flower that is bent by the storm. And after exhorting those who agreed with him in religious opinion to make more strenuous exertions to let their brethren around them know what they believed, and why they were Unitarian Christians, in conclusion he remarks :—

"We do not believe that our opinions are necessary to ensure the final everlasting salvation of mankind, for purity of intention, holiness of heart, and righteousness of conduct are, as we conceive, the best qualifications for heaven. Nevertheless, though we do not attach to them all this importance, yet we do think them of great efficacy in establishing firmly our faith; in raising our views and feelings towards that great and good Being who is the object of our worship and our love; and in diffusing over our souls a perpetual sunshine, a constant glow of serenity and joy. So far from being matters of mere speculation, they appear to me to be the grandest principles of human action, and to be capable of sending more life and blood (if I may so speak) into the moral and religious system, than any other principles with which I am acquainted. In a word, they will furnish the best food for the head and the heart, they will exercise the reason, and delight the imagination, warm and

animate the affections, and carry captive the soul of man up to the throne of God."

In the year 1815, Mr. MADGE was called to preach in London before the supporters of the Unitarian Fund. In the report of the service, it is stated that this sermon, founded on the words of our Lord, "To the poor the Gospel is preached," contained a vindication of the principles and aims of the Society at whose anniversary it was delivered, and that with a singular flow of eloquence the preacher expatiated upon the mild, benignant and condescending genius of Christianity. He insisted with great force of argument upon the attainableness of Christian truth by all honest and diligent inquirers, even though of humble capacities and of limited means of improvement. He next repelled with warmth, the various pleas for withholding assistance from Christian associations. And he concluded with an animated appeal to the assembly on behalf of the Fund, introducing, most happily, a beautiful passage from MILTON on the duty and the honour of bearing open testimony to the truth. The sermon, excellent in itself, was delivered with a uniform animation and energy which caused it to be felt by all the hearers. By his manner, as well as

his matter, the preacher showed that he went heartily into his subject, and by both he made his way into the hearts of his congregation.*

More than half a century has gone since this discourse was preached, but it is impossible to read it now and not be impressed with the remarkable fervour which it exhibits, and the clearness and force by which it is throughout marked. How striking and convincing is the answer given to the question whether Christian truth should be carried into the dwellings of the poor, and whether they are fit judges of its value, and what benefit could they derive from its profession ?

"This question seems to receive a sufficient answer from the conduct of Christ; for he preached the Gospel to the poor, and to him they listened gladly. Human nature, in its root and stock, is the same in one age as in another; and as the doctrines which we preach are in our estimation the same as those which Christ preached, we argue that the same effects will follow from the same cause."

Having pointed out the evangelical character of the great truths which distinguish the Unitarian name and profession, and that they are level to the comprehension of every man of plain understanding, he proceeds to

* "Monthly Repository" for 1815.

reply to the enquiry, what benefits will the poor derive from the knowledge and reception of these doctrines ?

"What benefits, do you ask ? The benefit, I answer, of a pure, rational, unperplexing faith,—the benefit of being unyoked from the burthen of superstitious and tormenting fears,—the benefit of viewing God as a father and a friend, instead of a tyrant and an avenger, —the benefit of rejoicing in hope instead of grieving in despair,—the benefit of large views, of comprehensive charity, of elevating sentiments, of gladdening expectations, of heart-cheering, soul-ennobling, triumphant prospects of glory and happiness never ending.

"I must also remark that the best and strongest foundation for any religious and moral building is to be laid in the love of God. What is built on this basis is built for security and for permanence. It is not so much from an ignorance of their duty that men often act viciously, as from the want of that great spring of human action which, in contempt of difficulty and danger, urges us on to the noblest deeds of goodness, guided by no other rule than the will of God, looking singly to his approbation, and hoping only for his blessing. It is this mighty principle which, more than all others, constitutes the firmest guard on the sanctuary of human life. Now how are we to fix this principle, this high and paramount regard to the will of God, in the heart of man ? How, but by holding forth such views of the character of God, of his moral government, of his kind and merciful dealings, of the relation in which we stand towards him, and the large provision that he has made for our future happiness, as will fill the soul with sentiments of supreme veneration and grati-

tude, and draw the heart to the contemplation of God, as the most delightful as well as the highest object on which its affections can repose. If we have just conceptions of the character of the God we adore, if we behold him circled with all glory and perfection, with infinite goodness and infinite mercy, looking on all with an equal eye and regarding not the persons of men; then will our noblest affections be stirred within us, and we shall worship him with cheerful praises, with profound and joyful adoration, with admiring thoughts and dutiful wills. He will be a strength to the poor, a refuge from the storm, and a shadow from the heat.

"How acceptable must these views of the universal Lord be to the heart of a parent, let him be of whatever rank he may, provided he be good! He knows the love which he bears to his child; he knows the tenderness with which his failings are regarded; he knows the pity and the mercy which he is ever ready to show towards his errors and follies:—And is God so kind, so gracious, so ready to have mercy and forgive? Then, might an aged parent exclaim to the teacher of such doctrines, thou hast comforted my soul, thou has quieted my fears, thou hast fixed my trust, and now my gray hairs shall rest in peace;—now when I can say to my children, I am leaving you, but God shall be with you,—you have a father in heaven; love him, repose on him, he will never forsake you, he will not leave you comfortless. And lest any poor sinner should think himself forlorn and cut off from all hope by reason of the number of his transgressions, we address him in the spirit of Christ's most beautiful parables, and represent God as a compassionate father, mourning over the absence of his disobedient ungrateful child, cherishing the first symptoms of returning filial duty, holding forth the

hand of ready and cordial acceptance, and rejoicing over the son that was lost but is found, that was dead but is alive.

"What heart is there, whether of father or of child, that could remain indifferent to these representations? If preaching founded on these views of the Divine character will not be acceptable to the poor, what, we may ask, can? or, Upon what better principles can our religious affections be grafted than upon these, and upon the doctrines necessarily included under them?"

In the spring of the year 1817 Mr. MADGE preached one of his ablest discourses, in his own pulpit at Norwich, on Religious Liberty. It was immediately printed at the unanimous request of the congregation, and affectionately inscribed to the members of his flock. It is not stated that there were any special circumstances to call it forth, and it was probably delivered in the ordinary course of his ministry. In fervent and stirring words he asserted the rights of conscience, examined and answered the various pleas urged against its claims, and pointed out the unreasonableness, impolicy, and injustice of legislative, social, or sectarian interference with them. Christianity, he insisted, wants not the support of worldly power, disdains the attractions of outward splendour, and asks for no endowment, for no privilege but the privilege of

being left to itself;—it lived and triumphed when the most energetic efforts of the civil magistrate were employed to overcome and destroy it, and now it only requires the removal of the hindrances which check its progress, and for which its own truths and principles, motives and sanctions are sufficient, in order that it may have free course and be glorified.

The year 1817 will always be remembered as that in which the hopes of the nation were suddenly extinguished, and the kingdom involved in mourning, by the death of the Princess CHARLOTTE OF WALES, under circumstances of most tender and affecting interest. The afflicting visitation, exhibiting as it did the uncertainty of life—the frailty of youth and beauty, the nothingness of human power, and the instability of the highest earthly greatness —produced a profound sensation, and the eloquence of the pulpit was largely employed to enforce the lessons which the event suggested. Mr. MADGE availed himself of the occasion to carry on the views of those who gathered round him, from the fading treasures of earth, to glories that are imperishable, and to the life and bliss which are eternal. He

reminded them long before TENNYSON had so sweetly and beautifully sung :—

> "'Tis better to have loved and lost,
> Than never to have loved at all;"

—that it is not a vain thing to have cultivated kind and virtuous affections, even though they are interrupted by death, because they cannot fail of the blessing of Heaven, are a perpetual joy of memory here, and will be renewed beyond the grave, and endure for ever. "It is the part of wisdom," said he, "to listen to the voice which tells us in solemn accents that, notwithstanding all our care and anxiety, and in spite of all our efforts and skill, surrounded as we may be with all that wealth can command, or power procure, our hopes may yet be scattered abroad like the leaves of the forest at the first cold blast of winter, and all our time-built happiness perish as the bursting of a bubble. It is the part of wisdom to impress this event deeply upon our minds, and to make such a lodgment of it within our hearts that it may sometimes rise up amidst the gladness of the feast, and the music of the harp, to scare our folly, to moderate the temper of our enjoyments, to call home our scattered and wandering thoughts, and tune our minds to notes of seriousness."

The conclusion of the discourse was reported in the *Norwich Mercury*, and afterwards reprinted. No one will wonder at the admiration which it called forth who reads the following passage :—

"It is pleasant to be able to speak of the virtues of the great, and this humble though feeble tribute of respect to the character and memory of that illustrious princess who occupied so large a space in the public eye, and who had made her way into the hearts of all people, I pay willingly and sincerely. Over her ashes let the tear of pity fall. On no human grave can it drop more naturally or more gracefully. She, however, is gone to her rest, and her soul is in the hands of that God with whom do live for ever the spirits of the good. With her, therefore, all is well. But there is *one* who survives, lately the rejoicing companion of her few short happy days, and *now* the inconsolable heart-stricken mourner who demands from us the expression of our tenderest sympathy. And he has it. Oh! that the knowledge of this fact might impart to his darkened and sorrowing bosom one ray of light and of comfort. But I know that for the *true* consolation and support he must look to a higher source. To Thee, O God, who canst at all times disperse the clouds of sorrow, and give light to them who sit in darkness, to Thee he will look up in humble dependence on Thy goodness, and do Thou in mercy listen to his supplications and send an answer of peace. Hearken, we beseech Thee, to the prayers of the contrite, and give ear to the desire of such as be sorrowful.

And if any human voice could at this time reach him, I would say to him, mourn for the departed, but mourn not as those who have no hope. Think not that she is lost. When the body falls into dust the spirit returns to God who gave it. Think it not a vain thing to have cultivated kind affections and virtuous love. How small a moment has yet to pass and we all assemble in the world of spirits! Though your way be at present cheerless, though it be not strewed with flowers nor watered with comforts, yet fear not, trust in God; He will not leave thee or forsake thee. In due time the day will again dawn, and the shadows of darkness will flee away.

"Finally, let me conclude by again urging you to take the impression of this event into your inmost souls, and when every lower passion of your nature is hushed, and all earthly harassing cares are laid asleep, listen to the still small voice which you will hear issuing from it, telling you how vain and hollow is every thing, every enjoyment and every possession, that does not rest on the foundation of eternity and of heaven. Go, then, and learn to build your best hopes, where alone they are secure, on the rock of everlasting truth. A renewed mind, a purified soul, affections clothed in purity, peace and piety, will never fail of the blessing of heaven. These are the only enduring riches, the only trust-worthy support, the only imperishable graces. Let us then acquaint ourselves with God, that when we are called from this world and from the light of the sun, we may not be excluded from that kingdom which is indestructible, and that light which is eternal, but may be admitted into the communion of heaven, to the

fellowship of glorified spirits, to share their happiness and to partake of their glory. After this blessed hope let us daily aspire, and we shall certainly reap if we faint not."

Mrs. CAPPE refers to this discourse in a letter to Mr. MADGE:

"YORK, *June* 22*nd*, 1818.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"I believe I am a letter in your debt, but be that as it may, I avail myself of the opportunity of writing a few lines by Mr. THOMPSON to assure you of my kindest and best wishes for your health, and happiness, and though last, not least, for the continued and increasing success of your ministry. We were all particularly pleased with the portion of your sermon in the Norwich paper on the much lamented death of the Princess CHARLOTTE; — with the justness of the sentiments it expresses, the piety of the spirit which it breathes, and with the delicacy and sympathy with which you advert to the unspeakable sorrow of the bereaved mourner.

"I send you a copy of the third edition of the discourses on Providence,* in which you will see that I have adverted to that most afflictive event, and also to the astonishing progress of the British and Foreign Bible Society. It is my most anxious wish for Unitarians that they may be as much distinguished by their exemplary conduct and rational piety as by the reasonableness of their creed, and the firmness of their principles. It is unfortunate that the general

* Discourses on the Providence and Government of God, by the late Rev. NEWCOME CAPPE.

election here should be in the same week with the annual examination, so that I am afraid we shall have much fewer gentlemen than usual, especially as they are obliged to begin a day earlier. Mr. ROBBERDS preached two exellent sermons yesterday, on the subject of unbelief, — its causes and consequences. His manner is very serious, and singularly impressive. You know that Mr. HUTTON* is come to Leeds, where he is universally liked. It is an inexpressible satisfaction to Mr. WELLBELOVED that so considerable a number of the young men educated here should be already eminent, or likely to become so, and among whom we have great pleasure in classing our friend at Norwich, whom we had hoped to have seen here at this time.

"There is a hard fought battle in this city between the Whigs and the Tories: I am interrupted continually with the shouting of 'blue for ever,' on the one hand, and 'COKE and liberty' on the other. The young men at the college are very ardent in favour of the latter, although Mr. MADGE is not now one of their number.

"My daughters join me in kind regard, and best wishes, and especially in respect of a matrimonial connexion which we hear is in prospect.

"Believe me,

"Ever your affectionate friend,

"CATH. CAPPE."

The "matrimonial connexion" referred to by Mrs. CAPPE was Mr. MADGE's engagement to Miss TRAVERS, the daughter of BENJAMIN

* Afterwards the Rev. Dr. HUTTON, of Carter Lane Chapel, London.

TRAVERS, Esq., of Clapton, and sister of the eminent surgeon of the same name. They were married in the year following, 1819. She was a woman of singular sweetness of disposition, and possessed just the very qualities of mind and heart which made her union with one of Mr. MADGE's temperament peculiarly suitable. Their home on the Thorpe Road, at Norwich, was a very happy one. An old friend in writing to him twenty-three years after he had visited him in it, tells him that he had even then a vivid picture of the scene before him, and that in connexion with it, Mrs. MADGE's pleasant voice was still a well-remembered sound. His marriage not only contributed to Mr. MADGE's domestic comfort, but promoted his usefulness as a minister, and afforded much satisfaction to his congregation.

Mr. MADGE was not much inclined to correspondence, and there are but few of his letters that can now be recovered. He had been asked to give his opinion on the nature and duration of future punishment, and wrote in the year 1818, thus fully to state and explain his views on this subject. The letter was afterwards published in the "Monthly Repository":

"NORWICH, *Sept.* 6, 1818.

"SIR,

"I am one of those who, though believing in the doctrine of final restitution, admit it only on the ground of inference derived from those views of the nature of the gospel and of the character of God, which are contained in the Scriptures. That the doctrine is expressly and designedly inculcated in any one passage of the Old or New Testament, does not appear to me ever to have been satisfactorily made out. Nevertheless, it seems to be capable of very strong proof from induction, and by your leave I will briefly state a few of the considerations from which I think it may be fairly deduced.

"1. The word gospel signifies glad tidings—good news. I suppose it will be allowed that the language of Scripture is employed for better purposes than to deceive or mislead; and though when figurative language is used, we are to beware of a literal interpretation, yet where the language is plain and literal, where the expression is such as to convey only one idea—one sentiment,—and which cannot possibly be construed into a metaphor, it is right to understand it agreeably to its common accepted signification. Now, if Christianity be a message of good news, strictly and properly so called, is it possible that it can at the same time be the bearer of intelligence which throws all its good tidings completely into the shade? If it had been the medium of communicating to mankind the eternal condemnation of the great mass to everlasting, irremediable woe, *would it, could it* have been characterised as the *gospel?*

"2. In the New Testament Christ is uniformly represented in the character of a conqueror,—as a conqueror over death and the grave, vice and error, pain and sorrow. Satan, the adversary of all that is good, is described as baffled, overthrown, completely subdued. Christ leads captivity captive, subjects all things to himself, and resigns up the kingdom to God the Father, who becomes all in all. This is not an incidental nor an accidental representation of Christianity, but it enters into the very spirit and intention of the gospel. Now, if the majority of mankind are to be everlastingly miserable, (which must be the case if the wicked are to undergo everlasting punishment, for I fear the most benevolent mind will be obliged to rank the greater part of mankind in this class,) if the great mass of human beings are to be subject to eternal misery, how is this to be reconciled with the Scripture account of Christ's kingdom? If sin, and pain, and sorrow are to have an everlasting existence, and to number among their victims the far larger part of mankind, then Satan, the power of evil, is the conqueror, and not the Captain of our salvation: Christ is the subdued combatant, Christ the baffled warrior, Christ the beaten antagonist. The whole order is reversed, the whole scene is changed, the dominion of evil is confirmed, the reign of misery is established, the empire of sin is extended and perpetuated. But this belies the authority of Scripture: this is repugnant not merely to the letter, but to the whole character of the gospel. This notion, therefore, I must reject; and rejecting this, I must admit that death *will* be destroyed, that sin *will* be overthrown, that vice *will* be subdued, that misery *will* have an end. This appears to me to be the

direct and necessary consequence of the nature and character of the Christian revelation.

"3. The character of God, the description which is given of his goodness and mercy throughout both Testaments, warrants the conclusion that all things will issue well, that all human beings will eventually be happy. The language of metaphor seems to be almost exhausted by the sacred writers, to convey to our minds the most beautiful and touching images of the Divine goodness. He is our Father, He is love itself. He *delighteth* to do us good; He preserves us as the apple of his eye; He is a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy, a refuge from the storm, and a shadow from the heat. For what purpose now is all this language used? In mockery and in sport? Impossible!—it must be meant to convey to our minds the truths of which it is plainly and forcibly descriptive. If other notions of God had been designed why had not other terms been used? Why adopt the strongest possible language the other way? But no one denies, it may be said, that God is infinitely good, and infinitely merciful; not in words it is true. In the face of the Scriptures no man can be fool enough to say literally and directly that God is cruel, that God is unjust, that God is tyrannical; but yet men have not been afraid of attributing *conduct* to God which *is* cruel, which *is* unjust, which *is* tyrannical. Words are, or ought to be, the signs of ideas. In any transaction between man and man, if language were used by one party in a sense not understood by the other, or in a sense different from that in common use, and so were the means of deceiving him, it would be regarded as an act of treachery and fraud.

"I am told of such a man, that he is a kind,

indulgent, affectionate parent; of course I expect to discover in his behaviour clear indications of his kindness and affection; but I witness in his actions the reverse of all this; I see him exercising towards his children the greatest rigour and cruelty. Am I then to be imposed upon by mere words? No, words will weigh nothing with me against facts; my judgment is decided not by what has been said, but by what is done; and though the language of flattery may still be addressed to him, though he may still be called a kind and affectionate parent, I set him down in my own mind as a monster, and a disgrace to the nature which he bears. Now apply this reasoning to the character of God. He is described in Scripture not only as the best, but as the mercifullest of Beings, as the lover of souls, as one to whom judgment is a strange work, as a tender parent giving good things to his children who ask him for them, as mourning over the absence of his disobedient and wandering child, and then, when he sees him coming towards him weeping and penitent, eager to receive him back to his love; and yet, notwithstanding all this, some men would persuade us that for the errors of this short life, the great mass of mankind are to be doomed to excruciating, uninterrupted, everlasting torments. Incredible, impossible! Every particle of reason within us becomes vocal and exclaims against it; every feeling of the heart rises up in indignation, and cries out, it cannot be, for then God would be cruel, for then God would be unjust. It is therefore false. God *is* faithful and cannot deny himself. In this way it is that I deduce the great and important doctrine of the final salvation or restitution of all mankind. Whatever previous sufferings the sinner

may undergo, however long and dreadfully severe they may be, still if the Scripture account of Christ's kingdom and of the character of God be correct, if language be not employed to deceive us, the time will come when these sufferings shall have an end, and one magnificent scene of virtue and of happiness be unfolded to our view.

"But how, it may be asked, does this conclusion accord with the state of things as actually existing before our eyes? Here are pains, and evils, and sufferings,—here justice does not always triumph, nor truth always succeed. Often does piety mourn in secret and virtue bleed in public. Why then do you not conclude from this appointment of Providence, that God is not infinitely good and merciful? For this plain, obvious reason — that here we see only a part, and but a very small part of the field of Providence. If we could see the whole, the whole we should pronounce to be good; the end would justify the means, temporary evil would be absorbed in eternal good. The eye which now sees through a glass darkly, cleansed of its earthly film, and with its powers of vision strengthened and enlarged to look through the universe of God, would then be able to trace the order and harmony of the whole, would perceive light bursting forth from the midst of darkness, and form and beauty springing out of chaos, and truth rising up from the ashes of error, and ignorance giving way to knowledge, and sorrow brightening into joy. The use of those evils that now seem to sully and overcloud the works of God will *then* be perceived, and his wisdom, and his goodness shine forth gloriously and resplendently, like the noonday sun after struggling with the mists and clouds of

the morning. But in the other case, *i.e.* in the case of everlasting punishment, the *end* is misery, the result is bad—it is a cloud which will never be dispersed, a night upon which no morning will ever dawn. According to this notion punishment is not used as an instrument, as a means, as a step to something higher and better, but is itself the conclusion and the consummation—'the be all and the end all.' The two cases, therefore, are not parallel, or rather they are directly the reverse. The actions of God are to be judged of not singly and apart from one another, because they are all mutually dependent and closely linked together from the first to the last. There is not one loose or independent link, but every one is connected with the rest throughout the vast and mighty chain; and if this mighty chain could be extended out before us, we should see it going on from good to better, and better still in endless progression. It is the language of reason, it is the dictate of philosophy, it is the creed of piety, that the pains and evils of this life are not ordained for their own sakes, but are ministerial to better things, subordinate to higher purposes. 'Our present afflictions will work out for us a far more exceeding, even an eternal weight of glory;'—this is the reason of their *ordination* and *this* is their *justification*. The conduct of God in their appointment, so far from furnishing any evidence against the doctrine of the final happiness of all men, does by analogy establish and confirm it. It furnishes at the same time both a proof and an illustration.

"The sufferings of this world are tributary to future and greater good. Viewed by themselves they are an evil,—viewed in their consequences and they

are a blessing. They will be absorbed in the happiness which they create; — analogous to this is the ordination of future punishment. It is appointed with a view to the correction of evil and to the production of final good. This, as in the other case, is the reason of its appointment and the ground of its justification. Future punishment is not in itself a distinct, separate line of divine operations, but is only a link in the endless chain of causes and effects, acting in subordination to nobler ends and tending to everlasting happiness. Glorious, delightful consummation! Heart-swelling, soul-cheering, blessed anticipation! When all evil shall be destroyed, when pain shall cease, when Christ shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even his Father, having put all things under his feet, and subdued all things to himself, when the shouts of victory over death and the grave shall be echoed by every mouth, from one end of heaven to the other, when every soul shall bend before the throne of the Majesty on high, and 'God shall be all in all.'

"THOMAS MADGE."

This letter excited considerable attention. It was admired on account of its frankness, and applauded for the spirit which it breathed, and the eloquence with which it was penned. Many appeals were made to its author for further statements, and some persons were opposed to the conclusions at which he had arrived. But Mr. MADGE would not allow himself to be drawn into any public discussion

of the solemn subject on which he had been led to express his sentiments. Only to one writer does he reply, who, under the name of Cantabrigiensis, had submitted to him certain questions which indicated that his mind was really troubled with difficulties respecting the future condition of the ungodly, from which he anxiously sought relief. He desired to believe in the final happiness of all men, but inclined to think that the Scriptures supported the doctrine of the final cessation of existence to the wicked. To this correspondent Mr. MADGE sent the following answer, which appeared in the pages of the "Monthly Repository,"* and is addressed to the Editor:

"NORWICH, *Dec.* 1, 1818.

"SIR,

"It was not my intention or wish, in the few remarks which I sent you on the subject of the final happiness of all men, to enter into any controversy about it; I simply stated what appeared to me to be the true foundation on which the doctrine rests, leaving it to others to discuss its scripturalness or unscripturalness.—My position was, that it may be fairly inferred, nay, that it *must* be inferred from the known character of God and the current language of the Scriptures, concerning his goodness and mercy, and the nature and character of the gospel dispensation.

* See Vol. 13, p. 739.

My statement and reasonings upon it, Cantabrigiensis, to whom I am much obliged for the manner in which he has kindly noticed them, has not attempted to invalidate. All that he has brought against them is, certain difficulties with which the question seems to be attended. That there are difficulties belonging to it I am ready to admit, and few questions of importance are altogether without them. In coming to a decided conclusion upon most subjects of moment we have generally to strike a balance between contending claims, and to adopt that opinion where the difficulties are the fewest and of the least magnitude. Such is the case with the subject in hand. No view of it is altogether free from objections: the only question is, on which side do the objections range themselves in the most formidable and appalling attitude? In my estimation, decidedly on that of the everlasting, unmitigated punishment of the wicked.

"I will briefly notice the objections of Cantabrigiensis in the order in which he has put them:

"1. In one sense of the word, every thing which may be justly and truly inferred from the Scriptures is a scripture doctrine, though I own I had rather appropriate the phrase to 'doctrines expressly and designedly inculcated,' and not to opinions which are the mere deductions of our own reason. However high the probability may rise that we are right in our deductions from Scripture, still it is not equal to an express and positive declaration. To what is plainly asserted we cannot, if we admit the assertion, refuse our assent: but to what is only inferred, however clear to us the inference may be, the same authority cannot be attached. In logical strictness of speech, that only is a Scripture doctrine which

the Scripture writers have *expressly* and *designedly* inculcated. Though there are many expressions in Scripture which harmonize more completely with the doctrine of final restitution than any other, yet I am not clear in my own judgment, that the doctrine itself was *distinctly* in the view of the writers, and was by them intended to be brought before the mind of the reader. *It may be so,* but with the proofs of it I am not thoroughly satisfied. Had they designed to teach and enforce the doctrine as a part of the revelation of Christ, I should say with Cantabrigiensis, that they would not have contented themselves with here and there dropping an expression in favour of it, but they would have brought it forward plainly, expressly and purposely. It is partly on this account that I am induced to think that the writers themselves had no distinct contemplation of the doctrine. It may be thought rather strange, that a doctrine of so much importance should not have been made the subject of an express revelation, and truly it is a difficulty; but, both in the preaching of Christ and that of the apostles, the doctrine of future rewards and punishments is distinctly and plainly taught, and beyond this they are silent. They say nothing about the peculiar character of the heavenly state or its opposite. They enter into no particular description of the one or the other. They simply announce the important fact that man will be raised from the dead and receive his future reward of happiness or misery, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or evil; and there they stop. Why they have gone no farther; why they have said no more where we are so desirous of knowing more; why they have not told us some-

thing of the *nature* of future rewards, and the *nature* of future punisments; why the secrets of the world to come have not been in the slightest degree unveiled to us, we cannot say, except, that so it seemed good in the sight of God. But, does it follow, either with respect to moral actions or doctrinal opinions, that we are to confine ourselves to the *letter* of the New Testament? Nothing, it is acknowleged, must be thought or done in opposition to what is there taught and commanded; but are we to *confine* ourselves to this? With respect to morals, evidently not; for many things are verbally omitted which, nevertheless, it is our clear and bounden duty to perform, and which we shall neglect at our peril. Where we have not the letter we must consult the spirit, and abide by the spirit. This, in all cases of moral conduct, will be universally admitted. In matters of opinion the greatest caution must, no doubt, be used; but still I have no hesitation in saying, that the Christian has a right to pursue the principles of Christianity to their just and legitimate consequences. Christianity is not a regular, digested code of laws and institutions; opinions and doctrines are not taught systematically or arranged logically; but it is the spirit of all law entering into our minds and controlling their secret operations, raising us from the death of sin to the life of righteousness, and leading us from things seen and temporal to those which are unseen and eternal. It places before our eyes certain great leading principles and maxims, which, amidst the dark and conflicting opinions of mankind, are to be to us as 'the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night.' It exalts the human mind to an eminence where there is a more extensive field of vision and brighter prospects of con-

templation. It enlarges the power of its ken, and enables it at once to take a wider survey and a closer inspection. Why not use, then, the power and the privilege with which we are invested? Why be toiling at the base when we should be labouring on the summit? Why not mount the bright ascent and open our eyes to the wide range of glorious objects that is stretched out before us? Does Cantabrigiensis mean to confine our views of God and man, of heaven and eternity, simply and entirely to what is literally and directly taught in the Scriptures? If so, he will rob us of many comforts and hopes dear to our hearts and delightful to our fancies. Or, does he mean to say that no opinion ought to be decidedly formed where it can be obtained only by inductive reasoning? That the greatest care is requisite in such a process, lest we substitute our own crude notions for the truths of God, I admit; but, guided by piety, humility and honesty, an opinion fairly deducible from Scripture, is with me of almost equal authority with its express declaration. To weaken the force of my argument from inference, Cantabrigiensis attempts to parallel it with the argument for the doctrine of the Trinity. '*That*,' says he, 'like your system of final restitution, is bottomed on mere inferential reasoning;' but an inference may be true or false, reasonable or absurd, justly or unjustly drawn, consistent with the premises or inconsistent. Let it be shewn that the doctrine of the Trinity is really inferable from the language of Scripture, the constant, uniform language of Scripture, and, whilst I retain my faith in Christianity, I am bound to believe it. I do not reject the doctrine of the Trinity merely because it is built on the ground of inference, but I reject it because it *cannot* be fairly in-

ferred from the language of Scripture; nay, because it is in direct and glaring opposition to its *general* language, to the uniform declarations of Christ and his apostles. Whereas, I contend, that the doctrine of final restitution is to be inferred not merely from a few detached passages, but from the general strain of holy writ; that it is necessary to explain the plans of Providence, —necessary to give consistency and harmony to his attributes, — necessary to vindicate the ways of God to man; in a word, that it is a doctrine founded on nature and on reason, delivered to us by the voice of God speaking in 'the things that are seen,' and the voice of God speaking in our own hearts. Produce a tittle of this evidence for the doctrine of the Trinity and I bow to it directly.

"2. It is objected to me, that I carry on the argument as if there were no alternative but endless misery or everlasting happiness. Right. With me there *is* no alternative but the one or the other of these schemes. Of all the absurdities ever attempted to be palmed upon the mind of man under the semblance of truth, that of the resurrection and subsequent annihilation of the wicked is, in my apprehension, the greatest. Compared with this moral absurdity, the metaphysical absurdity of the Trinity is as the straining at a gnat to the swallowing of a camel. Reason staggers and reels at the very statement of the proposition, that the vast majority of God's rational creatures are to be rescued from the dominion of death, to be again made subject to its power. If this does not look like mere vengeance, I know not what does. To believe *this*, I must have damning proofs indeed, and not such as arise from the use of the words *destruction*, *corruption*, and the like, which in all ages

and languages have been used so laxly as frequently to imply nothing more than a temporary loss or deprivation, and not a final and total one. If the proposition were more limited, if it asserted only that a few hundred, or a few thousand, or even that a few millions were to be destroyed for the sake of the greater order and happiness of the whole, something of its absurdity along with its horror might be abated; but when the proposition is so unlimited and sweeping (and this it must be, if it be taken at all,) as to include the immense majority of mankind, of millions piled upon millions, so that the head becomes giddy with attempting to count them — I am utterly astonished that any one in his right mind can for a moment believe it. The doctrine of eternal punishment may be so modified and expressed as to render it in comparison with this, quite rational and merciful; and if I were compelled, by the gripe of evidence, to relinquish my present conviction in that of the final happiness of all men, I should certainly have recourse to the modified doctrine of eternal punishment. A man may be continually growing better, and happier, and yet be everlastingly the worse for the sins which he has committed. The doctrine of eternal punisment explained and modified somewhat in this way, as I *have* known it done by some *very moderate* Calvinists, I hold to be infinitely preferable to that of total destruction.

"The remarks which Cantabrigiensis has made upon the analogy to be drawn between the destruction of the lower animals and the destruction of man, appear to me to bear little upon the question. 'The spirit of a beast goeth downward, but the spirit of a man goeth upward.' Man posseses a higher life than that

of the brutes around him, and it is of this higher and better life that the Scriptures speak when they declare that it shall not be subject to death. 'The body with *its* life shall return to the dust from whence it came, but the spirit with *its* life to God who gave it.' When the Scriptures declare that death shall be destroyed, that over his empire a complete and final victory shall one day be obtained, they, of course, speak only with reference to man—to man as created in the image of God, as a being breathing thoughtful breath, a creature of large discourse, looking before and after, and with thoughts and hopes that 'wander into eternity.'

"3. The last objection made by Cantabrigiensis to my argument, proceeds upon a misapprehension of my meaning. I do, indeed, lay great stress upon the plain language of Scripture, and the necessity of 'taking it in its common, accepted signification,' but *only*, as I before remarked, *where the language is such as to convey but one idea, one sentiment, and when it cannot possibly be construed into a metaphor.* This part of the sentence, which so qualifies its meaning, 'Cantabrigiensis' must have overlooked. I knew well enough that to take every expression in its plain literal sense would be often absurd; and, permit me to say, that it is equally absurd to torture a plain, simple, unfigurative expression (if I may so term it), into a meaning totally foreign from that which its obvious construction bears. One of my reasons for not resting the doctrine of final restitution on the express language of Scripture is, that I am not certain that the words usually appealed to for this purpose, *must necessarily* bear the sense which is attempted to be fixed upon them. I therefore lay down certain pre-

mises which *are* supported by the plain, uniform, unfigurative language of Scripture, and from which I think the doctrine itself is directly and clearly deducible. Will Cantabrigiensis deny that man is the object of God's tender love and care, or that *this* love is expressed in Scripture, in language which it is impossible to misunderstand? That God is good to all, and that he delighteth in mercy, is so often asserted, and in so many various forms of expression, that no Christian has, in so many words, ventured to deny it. It is founded on language which conveys to us only 'one idea, and which cannot possibly be construed into a metaphor.' *This* is the kind of language which I insist upon being taken in its common, accepted signification. It is upon *this* kind of language that I lay so much stress; it is upon *this* kind of language that my premises are founded, and hence the relevancy and the importance of the observation at which Cantabrigiensis expresses his surprise.

"I will illustrate my meaning by an observation on controverted doctrine of the atonement. The advocates of this doctrine bring forward in its behalf, certain expressions, such as 'sacrifice, propitiation, ransom,' But these words are *capable* of being rendered figuratively. I do not now contend that they *must* be so rendered, but that they *may*. When, however, it is said that God forgives sins freely, these words are *not capable* of being construed figuratively, they *can* admit only of one meaning, and that meaning which is agreeable to their 'common, accepted signification.' In all controverted questions I lay the greatest possible stress upon *this* sort of language. Where I can get get hold of a phrase which can be taken only

in one sense, it is with me of much greater weight than a hundred phrases which are susceptible of many interpretations, and which *may* bear a figurative construction. Now I contend that the *premises* upon which I have rested the doctrine of the final happiness of all men, *are* supported by this sort of plain Scripture language, and that to weaken the authority of these premises it must be shewn that the language by which *they* are supported *is susceptible* of a different construction from that which I have given it. Let this be done and my argument will be shaken, but till then I shall believe that it stands perfectly secure, and bids defiance to every other attack.

"Cantabrigiensis asks also, 'whether, if the Scriptures had been designed to teach the final cessation of existence to the wicked, the sacred writers could have used more plain, express, and positive language than they perpetually adopt.' I have no hesitation in saying that they *could*, and that it is because, upon this subject, they have used words which are capable of bearing *more* senses than one, that we are not obliged to adopt the interpretation which the annihilation scheme requires. If the original of the words 'destruction, corruption, death,' had but one signification, and that signification which accords with their literal meaning, the objection of my friendly opponent would have had considerable force, but he well knows that this is not the case. He knows that these words are used in several different senses, and that, therefore, it is incumbent upon him, when adducing them for the purpose of establishing the doctrine of the annihilation of the wicked, to shew, that when applied to this subject by the Scripture writers, they *must* and *can* be understood only in their

literal acceptation. But Cantabrigiensis must also be aware, that unless he gives up the resurrection of the wicked (a doctrine which is most plainly and expressly taught in Scripture), he will be obliged, in many cases, to give up the literal meaning of the words to which he appeals. I do not choose to enter into any dispute about the interpretation of the particular texts where these words occur. Let this be done by those who are more capable and more fond of verbal criticism than myself. All which I contend for, and all which is necessary to my purpose is, that the words to which Cantabrigiensis refers, as of so simple and plain a signification, *are capable* of being understood in different senses, and consequently, that something more is necessary to give colour and complexion to the miserable doctrine of annihilation, than the mere use of these words. Let him turn to Schleusner's Lexicon, and he will there see that the language in which he supposes this doctrine to be expressed, is not so plain and positive as his statement represents it. Why, then, oh! why give it a meaning which strikes upon our hearts with horror, at which humanity trembles and turns pale, which is abhorrent to all our notions of that love which never slumbereth, and of that mercy which never faileth; which takes from Christ, 'the resurrection and the life,' more than half of the glory of his conquest, and still leaves to death and the grave the larger portion of their spoil, the greatest share of power and of empire?

"I have only to add, that it will give me great pleasure if I have been able to afford Cantabrigiensis the slightest degree of satisfaction.

"THOMAS MADGE."

The last days of the year 1818 were sadly darkened by the fall of Sir SAMUEL ROMILLY, under circumstances which added to the mournfulness of the removal of one whose loss was felt to be a great calamity, not only to his own country, but to the civilized world. In the temporary alienation of those fine powers of understanding by which he was distinguished, brought about by overwhelming grief, and painful mental depression, on account of the death of his beloved wife, his delirium armed his own hand against himself, and the nation was in an instant deprived of one of its brightest ornaments. The event gave an unexampled shock, and was deeply felt. His name was associated with the noblest hopes of his race. As a husband, father, legislator, patriot and philanthropist, he was honoured wherever virtue and benevolence were regarded, and enjoyed the confidence and attracted to himself the homage of the venerable, the wise, and the good. It was natural that the departure of such a man should have been dwelt upon very generally by the ministers of religion in all churches. Mr. MADGE directed the thoughts of his people to the lessons which the occurrence suggested, and

sent the concluding remarks of his address from the Octagon pulpit for insertion in the "Monthly Repository."

"NORWICH, *Nov.* 9, 1818.

"SIR,

"In common, no doubt, with most of your readers, my mind was greatly shocked and saddened by the mournful and bitter intelligence of the melancholy termination of the life of Sir SAMUEL ROMILLY. Under the impression which it made upon me, and from my love and admiration of his many and great virtues, I closed my sermon of last Sunday evening with the following brief but humble tribute of respect to his revered memory; which, if you are willing, I send for insertion in the next month's 'Repository.'

"I had been speaking of the need which man has of a revelation, and concluded thus:

"Inestimable is the value of our Christian faith, and happy is he whose mind reposes upon it with the most perfect trust;—happy he who, upon this subject, has the fewest doubts and misgivings. The longer we live, the more must we be convinced how much of the pleasantness and the beauty of this life would be taken away, if it were not regarded as the forerunner of another and a better. In this world, few days pass over our heads without the occurrence of something alarming and appalling to our weak and shivering nature. When we see how soon the greatest minds are overturned; how speedily the brightest intellect and the purest virtue become eclipsed, or go down ere their day be spent; when we see constantly removed from before our eyes those who have been the light and life and ornament of our

age, who walked in wisdom's ways, and trod the paths of justice; when we behold these things, and stand wondering at our own mysterious being, what a privilege and a happiness it is that, from such contemplations, we can take refuge in the thought of that country, nigh which despair comes not, and where the voice of lamentation and weeping is heard no more. Our country, mankind, has this week been deprived of one of its best and ablest friends. He is gone upon whom the eyes of oppressed and weeping humanity have been long fixed as its firmest stay and trust. He is gone whom Mercy and Benevolence were eager to acknowledge as their constant and faithful servant. He is gone whom all good men delighted to honour as the advocate of justice, and the defender of him that had none to help him. 'The eye that hath seen him shall see him no more.' We may seek him, but shall not find him.—

'Bitter constraint and sad occasion dear!'

"Mournful, indeed, it is, that such a life, at such a time, should have been lost to his country—to the world: more mournful still that its beautiful day should have been closed by so dark an hour; but over this last and dreadful act let us draw, as no doubt the mercy of God *will* draw, the veil of oblivion. In the deep darkness of his soul it was done, and let it not be remembered against him. The bright deeds of his life who can forget? His labours of love who will cease to remember? The tear shed upon his grave will be a tribute to virtue — an offering and a sacrifice to the spirit of humanity. He rests from his toils, but his works shall follow him. The name of ROMILLY, embalmed in the regrets,

consecrated in the love and admiration of living minds, will go down to distant ages with a blessing on it. When we are numbered with the dead, and the remembrance of our names has perished from the earth, he will live in the thoughts and be cherished in the recollection of thousands. Generation after generation shall rise up and speak of his good deeds, and teach their children to lisp the story of his virtues. The remembrance of his name shall dwell in the bosoms of the just, and warm their hearts to mercy. Thus the virtuous and the good never die: they continue to live even upon earth, by the thoughts which they inspire, and the actions to which they prompt. And in heaven their spirits are with God. In his keeping they are sure and safe. Let us gladden and fortify our hearts with this faith. When the sun of our human hopes is set, and the light of present comforts is withdrawn, let us think of that day which no darkness shall overshadow, when God shall be unto us an everlasting light, and his favour our eternal glory.

"THOMAS MADGE."

The Western Unitarian Book Society held its Annual Meeting at Bath in the year 1819, and Mr. MADGE was invited to preach on the occasion. His fellow-student, Mr. HUNTER, was then the minister of the Unitarian chapel in that city, and the prospect of renewing his intercourse with a valued friend, and of seeing the Rev. JOHN ROWE, of Bristol, to whom he was spiritually so

much indebted,—must have been a strong inducement to Mr. MADGE to undertake the duty. His text was chosen from 1 Cor. xiv., 19: "Yet in the Church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue." The discourse is said to have afforded a striking illustration of the sentiments expressed by the Apostle Paul, and was an able and energetic and eloquent defence of the use of reason on the subjects of revelation, with regard both to its evidences and its doctrines. An earnest and unanimous request was made to him for its publication, with which he did not comply, and I am told by one of the oldest living members of the Society,* who was present at the meeting, on the ground that it formed part of a work which he was engaged in preparing for the press. This work was never completed, and there are now no means of ascertaining what were his ideas and his purpose concerning it. The same gentleman, who has a vivid recollection of the effects produced by Mr. MADGE's preaching at this time, informs me that the sermon was a

* The Rev. H. E. HOWSE, of Bath.

very remarkable one, and expresses a wish that it could even now be printed. But no trace of it remains. It occupied, he recollects, an hour and a half in the delivery,—a very unusual thing with Mr. MADGE, who was not remarkable for "long preaching," but remembered and acted upon the observation of one of the old Puritan divines, that it was better to send away the people "longing than loathing" from the public services of religion. At a later part of the day he was again called upon to speak, and according to the report of the proceedings which has been preserved, made many excellent observations on the noble cause for whose promotion the friends around him had assembled, and the gradual progress of Unitarianism in England and on the Continent.

GEORGE III. survived the Princess of Wales rather more than two years. He died in the early part of the year 1820. The long reign of the aged monarch, the many stirring and important occurrences that transpired during its continuance, the public measures pursued under his rule, and the great difference of judgment that prevailed concerning the character and policy of the general adminis-

tration of his Government, were topics on which a preacher like Mr. MADGE would be expected to speak. He was, indeed, requested to do it. And never, certainly, was an opportunity used with greater faithfulness, according to his own conception of the duty which he had to perform. To the excellence of the personal manners and private morals of the King he bore willing testimony, and represented him as faithful to his engagements, moderate in his pleasures, temperate in his habits, and sincere in his piety, and worthy of being held up to the regard and imitation of all ranks and conditions of men. But of the general policy which he had sanctioned and favoured, he did not hesitate to avow his abhorrence, and to denounce it as unjust and oppressive. There were, he admitted, acts of his reign that were of a redeeming quality, and deserved to be designated glorious, amongst which were the abolition of the slave-trade, and the repeal of persecuting statutes on account of religion. "But in looking back," he said, "upon it, these instances of sound and liberal policy come to me with a fragrance and a freshness resembling that which the traveller feels on beholding the green oasis in

the midst of the desert; "like stars in a moonless night, they shine upon us with a tranquil and heavenly radiance."

No one was more ready to confess than Mr. MADGE that the pulpit should be preserved from the excitement and bitterness of political disputes. But he likewise insisted that it should be the last place in which hypocrisy should play its tricks,—for subserviency to the work of statecraft or priestcraft, for vanity to be soothed, or ambition to be gratified; and that there, if anywhere, should be uttered the words of truth and soberness.

How just and impressive are the following words in relation to those who occupy the highest stations in society:—

"Public characters are public property, and when the course of their conduct is at variance with the interests of truth and the welfare of society — when the effect of their measures has been to widen the dominion of misery and oppression, and to narrow the boundaries of freedom and of happiness, it is the duty of the man and of the citizen, it is the duty of the moralist and the Christian, clearly to mark the nature of such actions—plainly to denounce the mischievousness of the example — and solemnly to deprecate the continuance of the evil. There is much, I know, to be said in extenuation of the follies of princes, and even in mitigation of their crimes;

and, as far as they themselves are individually concerned, it is but fair and just that every alleviating circumstance should be taken into the account. In the estimate of their personal qualities, let us do as we would be done by,—let every thing that the tenderness of Christian charity can suggest be thrown into the favourable side of the balance, and let the scale which weighs in their behalf be made as heavy as it can be. It is not fit and becoming in us, frail and fallible as we are, to be severe and strict in marking the personal failings of *any* of our fellow-creatures, much less of those who, through all their life-time, have been subject to the worst of temptations. 'The Lord is a God of knowledge and by him actions are weighed.' Still, when we consider the power of good and of evil which is put into the hands of the chief magistrate of a mighty country, when we calculate the quantity of happiness and comfort which it is in the power of a patriot king to spread around him, and when, on the other hand, we reckon up the sum of misery, the sorrows and tears, of which a vicious administration of our public affairs may be productive—when we think of the vast interests which are often suspended on the single decision of a single monarch — when we reflect how much of the prosperity of every district, of every town, of every individual in the kingdom is at the mercy of those who are placed at the head of the government, it cannot surely with any propriety be maintained, that the public conduct of such men, when they have ceased to be, is not a fit subject for examination and discussion. Why, of all seasons, this appears to be the most convenient and fitting for scrutinizing the

measures that have been pursued, their causes and effects—that what in the past we see wrong may be corrected, what right may be continued."

How worthy again of the preacher of Christian righteousness, is the language which Mr. MADGE employed with reference to the blood and treasure squandered in this reign, in endeavouring to prevent American independence, and in replacing the Bourbons on the throne of France :—

"In the course of these memorable contests, which have entailed upon us burthens which we shall continue to feel every day and every hour of our lives, the warrior may find something of which to 'talk exceeding proudly.' He may boast of the skill of our commanders and the prowess of our soldiers—he may see what to him appears glorious in ensanguined fields and smoking cities—in wasted provinces and deserted villages — in mangled limbs and dying agonies — in orphaned children and widowed mothers—in blighted loves, and withered hearts, and ruined hopes. But the Christian has learnt his language and borrowed his terms from a different vocabulary. He is not to be blinded and spellbound by a word — hoodwinked and cheated by sounding appellations and glittering vanities. In his eye nothing is stamped with the character of glory, but that which gives to the spirit of liberty a higher elevation and wider range of action— which enlarges and beautifies the temple of knowledge, strengthens the fortress of justice, and surrounds with fresh ramparts the citadel of truth. To him there is no national glory, but in the movement of

the national mind in the direction of wisdom, integrity, virtue, and humanity. That all war is unlawful and without the accompaniment of actions that may justly be styled glorious, he is not, perhaps, prepared to maintain; but he sees nothing for admiration to dwell upon in the beat of the drum, the sound of the trumpet, the proud trampling of horses, or the fierce clashing of arms. From spoils and blood, and tyrannies and tyrants, he turns away his eyes to the peaceful triumphs of truth and righteousness, and inclines his ear to the 'still small voice of reason.' If, however, to repel the rude assaults of lawless power, sacrifices *must* be made—sacrifices of property, life, and comfort —and if these sacrifices, when thus called for, are cheerfully offered and manfully sustained, a glory is reflected from such conduct, of which it is right to speak exultingly. For it would be weakness to bewail the hardships to be borne, the privations to be felt, and the sufferings to be endured, when those sufferings and privations are to be laid, as a sacred offering, upon the altar of liberty and duty."

The prayer for his country with which Mr. MADGE concludes the discourse has been answered. The mighty words of MILTON and LOCKE, SYDNEY and HAMPDEN, have not been written and spoken, nor their great deeds done in vain! The time has arrived, and the delightful spectacle has been, and is, seen, of the Sovereign leaning upon the affections of her people, and her people trusting in the love of their Sovereign; — when, from the

highest to the lowest, confidence is returned by confidence, and attachment produces attachment — when, by mutual concessions and mutual forbearance,—by reciprocity of obilgations, and reciprocity of kindnesses, we have become a free, happy, harmonious, and united people.

Another interesting sermon was published in the year 1822 by Mr. MADGE, which he preached at the opening of the Unitarian Chapel at Diss, in Norfolk, on "Praise and Thanksgiving to God." This chapel was built to supply the place of one at Palgrave, a short distance from the town in which Mr. BARBAULD had officiated; and Mr. MADGE sent a copy of his discourse as soon as it came from the press to Mrs. BARBAULD, who was then living at Stoke Newington, from whom he received the following letter, dated November 14:—

"DEAR SIR,—I beg you will accept my thanks for the copy of your eloquent and brilliant sermon, which has been transmitted to me. I must ever feel an affectionate interest in a congregation where I have spent many years, and where Mr. BARBAULD and myself experienced much kindness. I am very glad they have been able to build the pretty Meeting which forms the frontispiece to your animated discourse. May they never want a minister to fill it respectably! I presume, sir, you will pay your duty

to the metropolis before it be very long; and though I know your time must be much taken up there, if there should be any portion of it you can spare for Newington, it will give great pleasure to your obliged,

"A. L. BARBAULD."

There is much in the discourse of which Mrs. BARBAULD so approvingly wrote that might well be addressed to Unitarian churches now. Speaking of the office of the Christian ministry, and of lay preaching, how truly and forcibly did Mr. MADGE observe,—

"It is, indeed, customary with us to look to one particular person to conduct our religious services: but this is done, not because we suppose that person to be under an especial call or illumination; or endowed with greater sanctity, or possessed of greater privileges, than others of the congregation of whom he is one; but because it has been deemed to be more expedient, to be more conducive to order, decorum, and propriety, and generally speaking, to contribute more to the edification of the hearers, to depend upon the stated and regular services of one, than upon the uncertain and occasional services of many. Among us, however, no one, I should suppose, imagines that a minister is possessed of any authority, personally considered, but what is conferred by those who appoint him. Their selection is, in fact, his ordination; and if he lays claim to any powers but what are derived from those among whom he serves, he is guilty as it appears to me, of unwarrantable assumption; and to such an encroachment and usurpation, if it ever be

attempted, we shall, I hope, oppose a Christian and temperate but firm and manly resistance. Anciently the public services of the Christian Church were conducted by the elders of the congregation; and though, as a general rule, I fully admit the expediency and the utility of the present practice, yet I conceive it would often be desirable, sometimes most desirable, to recur to the old custom. It is not well for us to be always exhorting,—we also need to be exhorted; it is good for us to listen to advice as well as give it; to be sometimes hearers as well as preachers of the word. Indeed, I cannot but think that it would be a most impressive and affecting spectacle, to see an old man, no less venerable for his piety and virtue than for his grey hairs, stand up amidst his fellow-worshippers, and deliver, before he died, his grave and solemn testimony in behalf of religion; assuring us, from his own observation and experience, that 'her ways are ways of pleasantness,' and that 'her paths are the paths of peace.' If from such lips, the truth did not come mended, it would at least come recommended,—it would be listened to with double attention, and would come upon our souls with double power."

It is added, in a note,—

"There is an inconceivable prejudice existing in our congregations against what are called lay-preachers. Why, what is a dissenting minister but a lay-man? What right, what title, what pretensions has he to the character of a priest? or what ordination has he, but the choice of those who elect him to conduct their religious services? Why, then, should not any one of the congregation of good character and respectable talents, and with a capacity of reading distinctly be thought sufficiently qualified for the occasi'

discharge of this duty? Is it because he has not received an academical education, and does not wear a black coat? It is time to put away from us these childish things, and to act a more manly and consistent part. We ought long since to have out-grown this nonsense, and to have laid it aside. If it be ridiculous to see a dissenting minister putting on the airs of one of the established priesthood, it is no less ridiculous to see a congregation in a dissenting meeting-house aping the manner and forms of a cathedral assembly. Decayed, worn-out prejudices, like ivy on an ancient building, may, without incongruity, hang about old corrupt establishments; but they can excite only a feeling of indignation or contempt when we see them attached to reformed institutions,—institutions which look only to 'the law and the testimony,' the *quid utile, quid non.*"

There are those still living at Norwich who retain a vivid impression of the effect produced by Mr. MADGE's discourses. J. WITHERS DOWSON, Esq., one of the oldest surviving members of the Octagon Chapel, has kindly furnished me with the following particulars concerning the Norwich ministry of his friend and pastor, and the various ways in which he endeavoured to promote the moral and spiritual welfare of his people whilst it continued :—

"I was quite a boy (he writes) at the time, but have a vivid recollection of the very clear and animated manner in which Mr. MADGE set forth both the evidences of Christianity and Unitarian Christian doctrines, so that quite young people like myself

could understand and appreciate them. I was then at the Grammar School here, so ably and liberally conducted by the Rev. EDWARD VALPY, brother of Dr. VALPY, of Reading, and the large majority of the scholars belonged to the Church of England. But, strange to say, in all matters of biblical controversy those of us who were Mr. MADGE'S young disciples were generally appealed to, as apparently understanding such questions better than the rest. It should not be supposed, however, that Mr. MADGE'S teaching was principally directed to controversial subjects; his most valuable and impressive sermons were on practical christianity, and I can well remember, after an interval of fifty years, his truly admirable exposition of the 'definition, by the apostle JAMES, of 'pure and undefiled religion.' As a young man I was frequently invited to meet Mr. MADGE and other friends at supper on Sunday evenings, by Mr. and Mrs. THOMAS MARTINEAU, parents of the Rev. JAMES MARTINEAU, at whose hospitable board there was an ample feast of reason and flow of soul. Mr MADGE, after his pulpit labours were over, seemed always fresh and ready to impart the most lively interest to the subjects which had occupied his and our attention during the day. This weekly gathering afforded a very delightful close to each Sunday evening. Mr. JOHN TAYLOR,* grandson of the celebrated Dr.

* Mr. JOHN TAYLOR was a man of gifted and cultivated mind, of active benevolence, and of fervent piety. He wrote many of the best hymns used in our public worship, and was father of the eminent family—JOHN, EDWARD, RICHARD, PHILIP, and ARTHUR TAYLOR, with their gifted sisters, Mrs. REEVE and Mrs. AUSTIN, who all knew and loved Mr. MADGE, and preceded him to the land immortal, in which he has now joined them, never again to be separated.

JOHN TAYLOR, founder of the Octagon Chapel, and his son, Mr. EDWARD TAYLOR, afterwards Gresham Professor of Music, with Sir JAMES EDWARD SMITH (whose widow still survives at the age of ninety-seven, in the full possession of all her faculties), and Mr. THOMAS MARTINEAU were then deacons of the congregation, which was never so numerous as during Mr. MADGE'S ministry. He and Mr. EDWARD TAYLOR were greatly instrumental in establishing our Fellowship Fund, and the Eastern Unitarian Society, both of which have now ceased to exist. But the Sunday School, vestry library, and Brotherly Society, formed during the latter years of his ministry here, still survive as monuments of his zeal. Mr. MADGE mixed freely with the best Norwich society of his day. He was an active member of the Philosophical Society, and frequently addressed public meetings on political subjects, especially advocating the cause of Queen CAROLINE. About the year 1810 Mr. MADGE married Miss HARRIET TRAVERS, who made a charming addition to our Norwich circle, and three children were born to them in Norwich—FREDERICK, AMELIA, and TRAVERS who was so well-known afterwards, and universally beloved. In the year 1825 Mr. MADGE had attained such eminence as a preacher that he was deemed no unworthy successor of the Rev. THOMAS BELSHAM, and he left Norwich to the great regret of all his hearers. But having since often visited the scene of his early labours, his memory is still cherished by the older members of the congregation with sincere admiration, regard, and affection."

Whilst at Norwich Mr. MADGE had the pleasure of an introduction to WORDSWORTH,

with whom, in his visits to the lake district, he was for many years privileged to enjoy frequent and friendly intercourse. Even as a school-boy he was a devoted admirer of the poet, and was accustomed in his enthusiasm to speak of him as the "divine WORDSWORTH;" and to the end of his days he continued an ardent lover of the poems in which he had found delight in his youth. He read them with great effect, and was ever ready in their defence. And I shall never forget the energy with which, when he had reached his eightieth year, he met the arguments of a gentleman who would not admit that WORDSWORTH'S poetry was entitled to the high place which Mr. MADGE had claimed for it.

After Mr. MADGE'S removal to Norwich, Mr. CRABB ROBINSON, who was then a barrister on the Norfolk circuit, was in the habit of frequently seeing him. And in his Diary and Reminiscences there is a reference to a call on Mr. MADGE, at whose apartments Mr. ROBINSON found "the great new poem of WORDSWORTH, The Excursion," on its first publication. Those who knew the two men will easily conceive the interest with which they would regard the book. "I

could only look into the preface" Mr. ROBINSON observes, "and read a few extracts with MADGE. It is a poem of formidable size, and I fear too mystical to be popular. It will, however, put an end to the sneers of those who consider or affect to consider him puerile. But it will possibly draw on him the imputation of dulness. Still, I trust it will strengthen the zeal of his few friends. My anxiety is great to read it." It seems strange now to peruse these sentences when the genius of WORDSWORTH is acknowledged, and he is regarded as one of the grandest of the poets of England. But it must be remembered that they were penned only a little while before the article in the "Edinburgh Review," on "The Excursion," which commenced with the words "This will never do," and described the poem as "a tissue of moral and devotional ravings, in which innumerable changes are rung upon a few very simple and familiar ideas." Time and more accurate thought, and better views, have corrected the wrong that was done by rash and adverse criticism. And those who like Mr. MADGE can fully enter into the contemplative spirit of WORDSWORTH'S poetry, and sympathize with the meditative life he

led, and with his love of nature, and of God, will find, it has been well remarked, that there is in his poems "a spring of something even fresher than poetic life, a pure, deep well, of solitary joy."

In the year 1823 Mr. MADGE was asked, in a manner that must have been very gratifying to his feelings, to become the minister of Paradise Street Chapel, Liverpool. The letter sent to him on this occasion expresses much regard for his character and great admiration of his talents, and assures him that, in the event of his acceding to their request, it would be the earnest desire of the members of the congregation to render a connection agreeable to him, which they were satisfied would be profitable to themselves. This document, now worn by time, has attached to it no less than one hundred and fifty-two signatures, and contains the names of some of the most respected and influential inhabitants of Liverpool. There were many strong inducements to the acceptance of this invitation; and Mr. MADGE often alluded, when dwelling on the past, to the difficulty he had in determining what duty required, when it was necessary that the decision

should be made. He was bound by many ties to Norwich. There was much in his position at the Octagon to gratify an honourable Christian ambition. He had no wish to leave it; his friends were most anxious to keep him with them; and, after serious consideration, he resolved to remain.

Formerly, in our churches, when the pastoral connexion was formed, it was regarded as one that would probably be permanent, and its term of service, instead of being as it often now is, for a few years, continued for life. The congregation assembled together as a religious family, of which the minister was the spiritual father. Continuing with the same people often from youth to age, going in and out amongst them in familiar intercourse, and gaining their veneration and confidence by his devout and benevolent life, he found his happiness in their respect and and love, and had no desire to leave them. There is something very beautiful in the picture of such a relation, and the advantages which resulted from it were such as no transient ministry can ever secure. JOHN WESLEY, I believe, was accustomed to say, that if he preached regularly for a whole

year to one audience, his sermons would fail at the end of it to interest his hearers, and that he should expect to see them asleep. The variety introduced into the Methodist pulpit, by the itinerant system, is thought to be a primary cause of its popularity. But such popularity is not to be compared with the valuable influence arising from the character and labours of a Christian teacher who is seen and heard in the midst of a generation which has grown up around him, and whose minds and principles he has helped very largely to form. He who thus devotes himself to his work, giving himself wholly to the improvement of his flock, is privileged to reap the best and most sacred fruits of human endeavours, and the reason ought to be strong indeed which should induce him to think of a new field of labour. There may be circumstances, of course, which seem clearly to point out to him that he is more needed in some other sphere of activity. But on no light grounds should a minister ever consent to relinquish a post in which he has undoubted evidences of his usefulness. He can, indeed, only be justified in taking such a step when he is convinced that he is

more needed in some other sphere of activity, and satisfied that the motives by which he has been actuated are such as conscience sanctions, and God will bless.

London naturally attracts to it what is most conspicuous in genius and eloquence. It is not, perhaps, conducive to the culture and exercise of some of the best qualities in a pastor and preacher; but where there is real power, it certainly enables him to obtain a wider influence than he can elsewhere secure. And when, in consequence of the increasing infirmities of the Rev. THOMAS BELSHAM, the trustees of Essex Street Chapel found that they must seek for some one to assist and succeed their aged and revered minister, and their attention was directed to Norwich, we cannot be surprised that Mr. MADGE should have complied with the desire conveyed to him, and removed to London. This was not done, however, without serious and anxious deliberation. He was not swayed by self-interest; for, in a pecuniary point of view, he gained little or nothing for some time by the change. The congregation, too, from the age and impaired faculties of the venerable man who presided over it, had not

been maintained in its former strength and vigour, whilst at the Octagon there was a large and flourishing society, and all classes sincerely loved their minister, and heard him gladly. But the call to London, after careful thought, seemed to be one which he ought not to refuse, and it is pleasant to know that his conduct was approved by those who grieved most at the separation which it occasioned. To say farewell to friends with whom he had lived so happily for nearly fourteen years was painful to him and to them. But on the dissolution of their union, a touching and beautiful letter was addressed by his people to their instructor and pastor, when he left them for his new and enlarged field of action, which well deserves perusal. It is dated from the Octagon Chapel, Norwich, March 27, 1825; and there will be few, I think, who can read it without emotion. Reminding him of the close connection which had subsisted between them, that it could not be severed without mutual feelings of regret, and that it is too intimate and important to be suffered to terminate with coldness or indifference, they go on to remark:

"At such a time as this we reflect upon the years we have passed in mutual friendship; we call to mind the period during which we have gone up to the house of God in company, and taken sweet counsel together; we look back upon it as a time of tranquillity and happiness, when Christian union has subsisted amongst us, when we have been at peace with each other and with our minister. The tie which united us is now broken, and we have heard you as our minister for the last time. This is a serious and an affecting consideration for us both. But we have the satisfaction of knowing that there exist no circumstances calculated to embitter this event. Our separation is that of friends, each giving and receiving every good wish, each desirous of cherishing every kind feeling, each anxious for the temporal and eternal welfare of the other. We shall reflect with pleasure upon that portion of our lives which has been spent under your ministry, and we hope with profit upon the Christian instruction and counsel which we have heard from you.

"At the close of your labours in this place we feel ourselves bound to express our cordial approbation of the character and spirit of those public instructions which you have here delivered. We have often been delighted with the strength and purity of their style, and charmed by their eloquence. But this is their least merit. Their temper and character have been every way befitting a minister of the gospel. That system of faith which we meet here to profess, has often been stigmatised as little better than Deism, and as a cold and heartless system of mere human speculation. From this unjust reproach you have

unanswerably defended it. Deeply impressed with the truth and value of Christianity, you have proved its claims to our acceptance with a zeal and eloquence which could not fail to carry conviction to every unprejudiced mind. You have never compromised the important character you have had to sustain, nor hesitated to declare to your people the whole counsel of God. And we hope that in looking back on the years which you have spent with us, you may feel a cheering conviction that you have not laboured in vain. This conviction alone can animate our ministers in the discharge of their duties, and we trust it has been yours to enjoy it.

"You have expressed a hope that the friendships which you have formed here may continue. In that hope we cordially unite. You carry with you the sincerest wish that every happiness may attend you. As you are now called to a wider and more active field of exertion, may you see the work of your hands more abundantly prosper! May the divine blessing attend your public labours, and every effort you make in the sacred cause of Christian truth, Christian liberty, and Christian holiness! May friendship, zeal, and charity abound amongst those with whom you will now be connected! May peace be within their walls, and may the spirit and temper of the venerable founder of their Church animate their conduct and yours! We can express no higher or better wish for you or for them."

There could have been no more positive testimony to the value of Mr. MADGE'S ministry

at Norwich than this. It was signed on behalf of the congregation by the deacons, JOHN TAYLOR, THOMAS MARTINEAU, EDWARD TAYLOR, JAMES EDWARD SMITH, SAMUEL MARSH, and GEORGE SOTHERN; and as a tribute from those who had benefited by his services, it is due to the memory of Mr. MADGE that it should be preserved.

CHAPTER IV.

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ESSEX STREET CHAPEL.

THE Chapel in Essex Street, Strand, is well known by name to Unitarian Christians, at home and abroad, and there are associations connected with it, which will always render it prominent in the history of the free churches of England. It is very plain and unpretending in its external appearance, and retains the almost Puritan simplicity of its original condition in its internal arrangements. But it is peculiarly interesting to the friends of liberal religion, because it was the first building avowedly erected in this country for the exclusive worship of the one true God, the Father, and from the fact that it was raised for Mr. LINDSEY, when he resigned, for the sake of truth and conscience, his vicarage of Catterick, in Yorkshire, and sacrificed his clerical position and prospects at

the call of duty. Had he remained in the Church of England, the powerful influence which would have been exerted on his behalf would, no doubt, have procured for him one of its highest stations. His friends were opposed to the course he took, contending that he had no right to expose Mrs. LINDSEY to the trials of poverty, and to difficulties with which she had never been accustomed to struggle; and for some time he was kept from fulfilling his purpose. But she cheerfully gave up her pleasant home, and the ease and affluence with which she was surrounded, and nobly encouraged her husband in the step he deemed it right to take. With about £20 a year, and the interest of a very small sum of money, they went forth, in the faith of the patriarch of old, not knowing whither they would be directed, but casting their care upon God, and assured that strength and support according to their day would be given them. With tears, the poor amongst whom they had lived, and whose temporal and spiritual welfare it had been their aim to promote, saw them leave, and Mr. LINDSEY's Bishop in parting with him said, that he had lost the most exemplary parochial minister in his diocese.

On leaving Catterick it was Mr. LINDSEY'S earnest desire to open a chapel in London, upon strictly Unitarian principles, and to gather a congregation from members of the Established Church, whose views were in accordance with his own. The form of service he determined should differ no further from that of the Church of England than was necessary to what he considered the true scriptural doctrine concerning the supremacy, and the sole worship, of the Father;—and the clerical dress he proposed to retain, with the exception of the surplice only. He soon found a sufficient number of persons to concur with him in the execution of his design, and a room was taken in Essex House, Essex Street, fitted up as a temporary chapel, and first used on Sunday, April 17th, 1774. As the place was soon found to be far too small for the number of persons who desired to attend the services, a sum of money was raised to purchase the premises, and the present building was erected; and close to it a residence for Mr. and Mrs. LINDSEY. The new chapel was opened in the spring of 1778, and it was at once crowded with hearers, who were influential both from their station, and their culture and character.

They loved, and reverently listened to, the venerable confessor who ministered to them, as though he were an apostle of Christ; but as he thought it important to obtain a colleague who would zealously coöperate with him in the diffusion of Christian truth, they cordially met his wishes by increased subscriptions, and the Rev. Dr. DISNEY, who had just resigned the rectory of Panton, and the vicarage of Swinderby, in Lincolnshire, was associated with him in the ministry, in January 1783. Mr. LINDSEY, though his faculties were in full vigour, gave up his public charge at the age of seventy, being unwilling to wait until he could no longer sustain it, on account of mental or bodily decay. Dr. DISNEY then became sole pastor; but in the spring of 1805, he was compelled, by infirm health, to retire from the pulpit, and was followed by the Rev. THOMAS BELSHAM, who had succeeded Dr. PRIESTLEY at Hackney, when he sought an asylum in America from the bigotry and intolerance to which he was exposed in his native land. Mr. BELSHAM was also a convert from the Trinitarian to the Unitarian faith. He had been an Independent minister, and was theological tutor in the Dissenting College at Daventry, which was a continuation of the

academy that had been under the care of the celebrated Dr. DODDRIDGE at Northampton. Mr. BELSHAM's mental abilities and attainments were of a very high order, and he was a sincere lover, and a fearless teacher, of what he conceived to be religious truth. Mr. LINDSEY was exceedingly anxious that he should be elected as the officiating minister of Essex Street Chapel, and for nearly a quarter of a century he was identified with it, and the most conspicuous preacher and defender of Unitarian Christianity in England.

CHAPTER V.

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EARLY MINISTRY IN LONDON.

AND now we must accompany Mr. MADGE to London, and see him standing in the place which had been occupied by the three excellent and uncompromising men who went before him, and carrying on their work with a kindred fidelity. Following such men, he was well aware that it would be no easy thing to answer the demand that would be made upon him. But he soon proved that he was not unequal to the duty, weighty as it was, which he had undertaken. Mr. BELSHAM'S strength rapidly declined, and he seldom officiated, after Mr. MADGE'S appointment; so that the entire responsibility of the services at Essex Street Chapel soon fell upon him. It was one which he was peculiarly fitted to sustain with honour to himself, and with satisfaction to others. His distinguished predecessors were

PULPIT OF ESSEX STREET CHAPEL.

necessarily much employed, as Religious Reformers, in attacking error. It was for him, he saw, to dwell chiefly on the positive aspects of the Unitarian faith, and to build up and unfold divine truth. As scholars and theologians, they were superior to him; but he had more popular talent,—more imagination, and greater power of moving the affections. His clear, sweet voice, distinct enunciation, and calmness and refinement of manner, gave a peculiar charm to his services, and admirably qualified him to minister to thoughtful and cultivated hearers. There were difficulties in his new position, but they were entirely surmounted; and he had the pleasure of preaching to one of the most remarkable and influential Dissenting congregations in the metropolis. Nor was he alone in his popularity. There were others in the Unitarian Churches of London, at that time, who were much admired in the pulpit. The Rev. Robert Aspland, of Hackney, was deservedly esteemed a great preacher, and he possessed an amount of influence which does not fall to the lot of many ministers. The Rev. W. J. Fox, too, was then at Finsbury Chapel, and attracting large numbers of persons by the splendour of

his oratory. But Mr. MADGE maintained and increased the repute which he brought with him to Essex Street; and it was not diminished even at the end of his ministry. Around him, from week to week, might be seen men from the learned professions, from both Houses of Parliament, from the walks of literature, from the magistracy of the City, from the busy marts of commerce, and also devout, earnest, and accomplished women, not a few;—and all found their spiritual wants met, and their religious faith expanded and confirmed.

When Mr. MADGE became the minister of Essex Street Chapel, it was an exciting period of English politics; but he took no part in political discussions. It is probable that he had found his active interference in such matters at Norwich a hindrance to his more special calling, and that he resolved, on going to London, to confine himself entirely to his pulpit and pastoral work, which was more than sufficient to engage his time and attention. "Recollecting," said Sir SAMUEL ROMILLY, "what passes at popular meetings, I cannot but think that those who often attend them generally lose by such attendance much of the weight and dignity which may have belonged

to their character."* Mr. MADGE may have been led, from what he had seen and heard, to a similar conclusion. But to whatever cause it may be attributed, the fact is unquestionable, that he kept himself to a great degree aloof from any active participation in the movements of the party with which his sympathies were politically in accordance. Within the first twelve years of his life in London, the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts was obtained, Catholic Emancipation was achieved, the Reform Bill was carried, and the Dissenters' Marriages Act was passed; and these were measures whose value he would be foremost to acknowledge, and for whose success he must have been very earnest in his desire. But ardent as long as he lived in his love of freedom, and only a few hours before his death, eager to receive intelligence of the War, in which he deplored that two great and neighbouring nations should be engaged, he never appeared publicly, I believe, except in the pulpit, as the advocate of civil and religious liberty. Seldom, indeed, was he seen on the platform, even at the meetings of his own denomination; and he declined every invita-

*See Life, vol. iii., p. 413.

tion to speak on such occasions that he could properly refuse. He must have been conscious that in the pulpit he was able to act most efficiently; and in the prayers so devoutly offered up there, and the hymns and lessons so reverently and beautifully read, and the sermon so admirably delivered, he often produced a thrilling effect, and an abiding impression.

Among the numerous letters which have been received from his friends since his death, there is hardly a single one in which there is not some mention made of the sweetness of his voice. He was favoured by nature in this respect, but he must have taken great pains with himself, or he could never have read and spoken so perfectly. I think it was Dr. CHANNING who once observed, that the full effect of the human voice, rightly used, has scarcely ever yet been tested. And when its importance to the preacher is remembered, it is indeed astonishing how little attention is paid to its culture. Thoughts that breathe, and words that would burn, if suitably expressed, fall coldly upon the ear and do not move the heart, if they are uttered without grace or ease, and with a tedious monotony of tone, to which it is not only wearying but dis-

tressing to listen. Mr. MADGE's success as a Christian teacher is to be attributed in no small degree to his effective speaking. And his example shows how much the objects of the Christian ministry may be advanced by one who has the ability to expound and recommend the truths of religion with pathos and power. His preaching was plain, but solid. With considerable poetic taste, he introduced but little of ornament or metaphor, avoided rhetorical embellishment and singular phraseology, and bestowed much care in the preparation of his compositions. He spoke with precision, and no one could fail to comprehend what he said. There was great fascination in his delivery, but it was accompanied by a real earnestness which gave it vitality, and a perspicuity of statement, a crystal clearness, which always made it intelligible. The rational and the spiritual were, in him, happily united, and he was thus enabled to meet alike the requirements of the understanding and the heart.*

* In conversing with Mr. MADGE, many years ago, on the subject of preaching, and on the success which had attended his ministry, I recollect he stopped in our walk, and remarked that the measure of public favour which he had received, had largely arisen, he thought, from the simplicity of the style which he had always endeavoured to use in the pulpit;—there had been never any difficulty, he believed, in understanding what he said.

In his private studies Mr. MADGE devoted himself very much to the history of the Christian Church, and especially to that portion of it which relates to the introduction and establishment of the religion of Jesus, and to the genuineness and authenticity of the writings of the New Testament. The shelves of his well-selected library were filled with some of the best books, ancient and modern, on these subjects. In his youth, unbelief in the Gospel was often bold and unscrupulous in its assaults on Christianity. He had diligently investigated the evidences, and firmly believed in the divine origin of the Christian faith. And with a sincere and hearty love of truth, in which MILTON said true eloquence largely consists, he often, in his early London discourses, showed by what convincing and varied arguments it might be proved that the Gospel is a message from the Father, through His beloved Son.

Not long after his settlement in London, a violent attack was made on Dr. PRIESTLEY and Mr. LINDSEY, by a writer in the "Quarterly Theological Review," in an article on the work of Dr. BURTON on the Ante-nicene Fathers; and it also displayed a bitter and hostile spirit towards Unitarians as a body. Mr. MADGE

felt the injustice of the accusations of ignorance and presumption, dishonesty and falsehood which were brought against those who had afforded the highest proof of their sincerity. The assertions of Dr. PRIESTLEY, he contended, respecting the general prevalence of Unitarianism in the first periods of the Christian Church, which had been questioned, were completely established. It might not be affirmed that his references were always exact, or that his translations and constructions of passages were uniformly correct, or that his inferences were, in every case, unexceptionable and just;—it was not his infallibility that was insisted on, but his honour and integrity. And it might be safely affirmed, that few men could have written so much on such a subject, and with the commission of so few errors as he had done. In his main position, Mr. MADGE urged, Dr. PRIESTLEY was impregnable and his victory over his opponents decisive and triumphant. With regard to Unitarians generally, Mr. MADGE forcibly pointed out that they had no outward inducements to attract to their opinions, and that those who adopted them must do so to their own injury and disad-

vantage. To him who had so shamefully assailed them, he said that

"Unitarians are, naturally, as sensible as others to the good and the evil which this world has to distribute; that their bodies and minds are as susceptible of pleasure and pain as those of the most orthodox believer; that they have no more fondness than he for slander and reproach; and that, if they could do so with a safe conscience, they would be as glad probably as he to enjoy the honours and emoluments of the patronised and endowed sect. Unhappily there are too many, holding Unitarian opinions, who are taken captive by these feelings; and, for the sake of the fashion of this world, of its privileges and advantages, of its glitter and its gold, fetter their consciences and restrain the going forth of their convictions. They love the praise of men more than the praise of God, and verily they have their reward. But when we see men, like those just mentioned, with high-principled courage turning a deaf ear to every other call but the call of duty, and casting a look of disdain upon the good things of this world when set before them as lures, as the price of their soul, the purchase-money of their sincerity and integrity; when we have before us such instances of the paramount influence and ascendancy of moral and religious principle, it is the weakest kind of railing to construe, under these circumstances, involuntary errors into wilful falsehoods, to confound the unconscious mistakes of the understanding with the dishonest purposes of the will. Of the attacks which are made upon us, incessant as they are, both from the pulpit and the press, it does not become us to complain; it being the

right and the duty of every man to endeavour to put down what he believes to be serious error; but we *have* reason to complain when our motives are arraigned, and our object is misrepresented. We *have* reason to complain that ignorance and calumny are constantly employed as instruments of personal annoyance, and that no method of attack is rejected, however unmanly and unchristian."

As the minister of a congregation which was formed on Unitarian principles, Mr. MADGE felt that he was set, as it were, for their defence and vindication. So long as there are important differences of opinion in the Church, it appeared to him that there must be some distinctive term by which they may be known. That of Catholic Christian, which he would have preferred, was already appropriated, and as the word Unitarian justly characterizes the leading doctrine of the faith in which the worshippers of one God the Father in the name of one Lord Jesus Christ, are united, he was content to be known as a Unitarian Christian. But he had nothing about him of sectarianism, in its narrow sense and intolerant meaning. He had no love of mere polemical disputation. He never sought controversy, though he did not timidly shrink from it; and in his sermons generally he dwelt upon the hopes and supports, the comforts

and obligations of religion. Unitarianism presented itself to him as Christianity, such as it was before the days of articles, confessions, and theological systems, and such as it would be again, when, as he conceived, the parties into which Christendom is now divided would be forgotten and lost in the one vast community which will eventually embrace and comprehend all true believers. He rejoiced, as he declared, that some of the loftiest intellects that ever mused upon truth, some of the noblest spirits that ever walked the earth, some of the purest hearts that ever throbbed with piety to God, have belonged to the same household of faith with himself, and that between this faith, "and the spirit of free, honest, and generous inquiry, there is a harmony which renders the one no unmeet companion for the other, which assimilates their characters and identifies their interests."

Mr. MADGE was a consistent and an uncompromising Unitarian Dissenter, because he could not comply with the conditions of worship and communion in the Church of England. With him it was not a matter merely of Church forms and Church governments, with regard to which considerations of expediency might be allowed their proper

weight. Trinitarian worship stood before him as a forbidden thing, and there could be no question as to propriety or utility, but only to what the spirit of submission and obedience required. Christian worship he believed to be that of one God the Father. He said,—

"This is the worship which Christ paid. This is the worship which the Apostles paid. This is the worship which, in express and positive language, we are commanded to pay. We are prepared to quote chapter and verse in the New Testament where this command is laid down with a clearness that precludes all doubt, and with a precision that defies all casuistry. Show us, we say, that this command is not given, or that we have mistaken its import, and one principal cause of our dissent will be removed. But unless this can be done, we stand upon a rock, and that rock is the word of God. In the Scriptures there are these plain and intelligible commands of the Saviour: 'Worship God alone. The true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth. When ye pray, say, Our Father. In that day ye shall ask me nothing.' In conformity with these precepts was his own constant practice, as well as the practice of the Apostles. He worshipped and prayed to the Father, and the Father only; and the Apostles, with one mouth, glorified God, even the Father. There is no mention in Scripture of the worship of the Trinity. There is no record of prayers being addressed to 'God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost.' We therefore dissent from, and protest against, the use of such language in

Christian worship. We protest against it as a departure from the plain and positive directions contained in the Christian's statute-book; as contrary to the injunctions and example of our Lord and his Apostles. Further than this we pretend not to go; or, if we do, we also are censurable for usurping a power and a prerogative to which we have no valid claim. As a Christian Church our business is to worship God in the spirit, and after the manner, that Christ has directed. In addressing our prayers to the Father only, we know that we are so far right, that we are truly and literally obeying our Lord's commands. Whoever, therefore, — be his opinions of the nature of the Deity what they may, — can unite with us in this worship is welcome to our communion. Our prayers are not to be made the vehicle of controverted doctrines, but of devout, grateful, and reverential sentiments of the Almighty Creator, of thanksgivings for mercies, supplications for pardon, and entreaties for moral and spiritual good. Consistently with these objects, the more comprehensive our language is, and the freer it is from all allusion to the differences existing among Christians, the more conformable it is to the mind and spirit of Christ, the more Catholic does our worship become, and the greater is its title to universal reception."

But though compelled to separate from the Church of England, on this great point, and on account of its restriction upon individual liberty of thought and judgment, and the imposition which it ordains of articles and creeds of human devising, Mr. MADGE had

no objection to a national religious establishment, purely on account of its being endowed and sustained by the State. There was a time, indeed, when he fancied that the English Church—the Act of Uniformity repealed—freed from the burthen of tests and subscriptions, and imposing no other terms than those prescribed by Christ and his Apostles, might be open to all Christians. And then, he said, there would be nothing on the score of conscience that would prevent him from entering it. These views were set forth in two discourses preached at Essex Street, "On the Union between God and Christ, and the grounds of Unitarian Nonconformity," which were amongst the best he ever delivered. But, however beautiful in theory such a broad and comprehensive Church Establishment may be, he was at length compelled to admit that there is no hope of ever seeing it in England. In the present divided state of religious opinion it would be impracticable. But to patronize and pay, and give social rank to the professors of one form of faith alone is to wrong those who dissent from it. And in order to perfect equality, the Church Establishment, he concluded, must, at no distant day, cease to exist, and all denominations be placed,

in the sight of the law, on the same level. To this result, it is quite evident, we are rapidly hastening; and the sooner it is accomplished the better will it be for the progress of truth, liberty, and charity.

A copy of the discourses to which I have alluded was sent by Mr. MADGE to Mrs. JOANNA BAILLIE; and, writing from Hampstead, and thanking him for his courtesy, she says, "Allow me now, after having read them a second time, to present my grateful acknowledgments for the instruction and pleasure I have received in perusing them. You have indeed justified your nonconformity by strong arguments, ably, and sometimes eloquently urged; and the work will, I doubt not, be very effective for the important purposes for which it is written."

Though unable to render Mr. MADGE any assistance, Mr. BELSHAM survived for several years, and his relation to Essex Street Chapel continued until he died, in the month of November, 1829. Laid aside from public service, he stood waiting, as he was wont to observe,—using the words of Dr. WATTS,—"God's leave to die." The constitutional dread of dissolution, which he had once known, was wholly removed, and relying

on the mercy of God in Christ, he heard calmly the summons to depart, and tranquilly entered on the rest that remaineth for the people of God. His funeral sermon was preached at Essex Street Chapel, by Mr. MADGE, and was most suitable to the solemn occasion. It was one of his happiest efforts. He knew the high respect in which Mr. BELSHAM had been held, and was anxious to do justice to his talents and virtues. And he did it. One who heard the discourse describes it in a letter written immediately after the service, as rich in language, instructive in matter, logical in arrangement, and scriptural in illustration. The text was appropriate,* the exordium touching, the biographical sketch well drawn, the notices and criticisms of Mr. BELSHAM's writings erudite and just, and the peroration in the best style of pulpit eloquence. The following remarks on the power of those by whose words and character we are influenced even when they have departed, are very true and beautiful :—

"Not only is it impossible for us to tell how much of what is really excellent and valuable in us, in our thoughts and feelings and conduct, is owing to

* Heb. xi. 4, "He being dead yet speaketh."

the silent and unperceived influences breathed over us from the great and wise and good of other days, but it would even be difficult for us to estimate the benefits and advantages which are, in this way, derived from the acquaintance and companionship of the humblest pilgrim who walks rejoicingly along in the paths of religion, and whose conversation and conduct come recommended to us, sanctified and adorned by the beauty of holiness. Most justly has it been said that 'there is a spiritual community binding together the living and the dead.' The star that, at this moment, shines with the brightest lustre, may have owed its splendour to the light of suns now gone down. The wisdom that in these times guides and directs, may have sprung out of the wisdom that formerly presided. The virtues that adorn this age may be traced to the virtues that prevailed in the last. The love of truth, and the courage to keep by it and openly to profess it under all hazards and difficulties, which distinguish one man, may have been formed and matured by the contemplation of those qualities as they honour and dignify the memory of another. And the piety that delights to take refuge in the thought of God, and to repose upon his love, and to confide in his care, and to wait for his blessing, may have received its first strong impulses from the gentle and touching persuasions of that eloquent human voice which is now sealed up in the silence of death."

The sermon was published at the request of the trustees and congregation. It is little

known, I suppose, by the younger generation of our ministers or people, and it has long been out of print. As a tribute to the memory of one to whom the cause of Liberal Christianity was greatly indebted in his own day, on account of his great and varied services, faithfulness and integrity, it ought not to be forgotten.

CHAPTER VI.

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LIFE AND MINISTRY IN LONDON, FROM 1825 TO 1835.

FROM the summer of the year 1778, when Mr. LINDSEY took possession of the premises in Essex Street, the house which had been erected in connection with the chapel was occupied by the minister. Mr. LINDSEY remained there until he died, and Mr. BELSHAM made it his residence afterwards as long as he lived. On his removal, Mr. MADGE and his family took up their abode in it. But Mrs. MADGE's health suffered from the closeness of the situation, and after a time it was found necessary that she should be placed where she would breathe a purer air; but she never recovered. She was taken to Hastings, and amidst the tranquil scenes of the country, and by the sea, which she loved, the end came, and her mortal remains were laid in the churchyard of a

quiet little village in Sussex, in the same grave with those of a very dear sister. Mrs. MADGE was a devoted wife and mother. Her excellence of character, and her kindly nature and culture had greatly endeared her to her family and friends, and her husband and children deeply felt, and sincerely mourned, the loss of her cheerful presence, and ever ready aid. The bereavement was one which brought with it not only sorrow to Mr. MADGE on his own account, but anxiety for those who were dearest to him. How deeply he was affected by it will be seen from the following most touching extract from a letter written to an attached friend of the deceased, not long after she was taken from him. It was never intended that any other eye should see it. But it so beautifully describes the high qualities of her whose departure he lamented, and his estimate of what she was, and of all that she had been to him, that it has seemed to me desirable and proper that it should have a place in these pages. It is dated

"CLAREMONT SQUARE, *August 20th*, 1835.

"Many times have I thought of sitting down to tell you of all that related to the last hours of my beloved HARRIETT; but when I have approached the task, resolution has failed me, and I have put it off for

a time, till I hoped my mind would be more composed. To wait, however, any longer for that would be to postpone writing to you till I know not when, for every day that passes only makes me more sensible to the calamity which has befallen me, and keeps alive a sorrow whose bitterness time may assuage but cannot remove.

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"Most justly have you characterized her as one who possessed a guileless heart and a perfect temper. Qualities were hers than which none more fitted to make pleasant and sweeter the home of man ever belonged to any one. Of kindness and affection she was full; and I should be ungrateful indeed did I not testify how large a measure was dealt out to me. Indeed her fault was that of loving us all too much. Her countenance was irradiated with almost constant sunshine. After the shortest absence I never returned without being met with smiles; and then, as you well know, there was in her manner such a sweet, gentle, innocent playfulness as tended very much to smooth the brow of care and to soften the vexations of life. In all the little nameless attentions, the daily and hourly watchings of unwearied love, she went beyond any one I ever knew. When I think that this is all over,—that in this world her love and kindness are gone for ever, I feel oppressed with a weight of grief under which I am ready to sink. Mindful, however, of her last request, I do strive to struggle with my feelings as much as I can. I engage in my accustomed pursuits, and am preparing a new edition of our Liturgy—with a new selection of hymns. In the midst of all, however, and spite of my utmost efforts, the sense of what I have lost sometimes comes upon me with such force and freshness as nearly to overpower me. Oh! the

anguish of having our tenderest affections thus bruised and crushed! I will only add, that the remains of my dearest HARRIETT lie in the same grave with those of her sister AMELIA, in the churchyard of the little village of Preston, near Brighton. There let them rest in peace till the dawning of a better day."

The grief and sadness which this affliction caused were only softened by time. But Mr. MADGE did not give way to depression. The duties of his office, and the care of his children, demanded his constant attention, and in the discharge of the one, and the loving watchfulness which he exercised over the other, he sought, with the divine blessing, support and consolation. The trial through which he had passed gave a more tender tone, too, to his ministry, and from his own experience of the unutterable value of religion in the time of trouble, he was the better able to speak so as to afford solace and support to the sorrowing and the suffering.

On his removal to London Mr. MADGE received much attention from the leading members of his congregation, not only in the way of social kindness, which is always a pleasant relief to a minister from his more serious avocations, but also in that real

sympathy which animates and aids him so much in the discharge of his duties, and which, after the approval of God, he feels to be the best reward of his labours. Mr. MADGE always gratefully looked back upon the friendship which he formed during his early ministry in London with JOHN TOWGOOD, Esq., who was a grandson of the Rev. MICAIJAH TOWGOOD, of Exeter, and well known as a banker in the metropolis. He was a man of great benevolence, and a pleasant companion, and by him and his family Mr. and Mrs. MADGE and their children were warmly regarded. At the house of WILLIAM STURCH, Esq., Mr. MADGE was also a frequent, and always an honoured guest. And when the dark shadow of affliction and death gathered round him, these friends and many others, who were connected with his flock, shewed their respect for him, their appreciation of his services, and their thoughtfulness for his position, by the considerate and delicate manner in which they raised a sum of about four hundred pounds, of which they asked his acceptance. This was done immediately after Mrs. MADGE's decease, and the amount was sent to him, with the follow-

ing letter, by EDGAR TAYLOR, Esq., to whom he was much attached :—

BEDFORD ROW, 17*th July*, 1835.

MY DEAR SIR,

I must beg you will receive my apologies for not personally waiting upon you to discharge the office which this letter will explain. I intended to do so to-day, but am unable to get away from a pressing engagement.

The enclosed is the result of the united desire of many of your friends,—mostly of the Essex Street congregation,—to tender you a mark of their regard and sympathy. They are fully aware how little an affliction like yours can have to do with pecuniary considerations,—and that there may even be a difficulty in alluding to them;—but they trust you will correctly estimate their motives in desiring that, at least in one respect, any inconveniences which they could remove should not aggravate the misfortune, which, when their design was formed, was only *impending*, and which they had hoped might be then still averted, and in its progress capable of alleviation.

At any rate they now hope that this offering may be accepted as a token of the sympathy and good wishes of friends.

I am, dear Sir,

Yours very sincerely,

EDGAR TAYLOR.

Rev. THOMAS MADGE.

There is no record of the reply which Mr. MADGE sent to this communication. But it could not fail to be gratifying and soothing to him in the circumstances in which he was placed, and it afforded an unmistakeable proof of the high estimation in which he was held by his people.

CHAPTER VII.

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LIFE AND MINISTRY IN LONDON, FROM 1835 TO 1845.

IN the year 1831 Dr. JOSEPH TUCKERMAN, of Boston, Massachusetts, who had been distinguished in his own country by his successful efforts in conveying Christian influences to the homes of the most destitute and neglected classes, visited England. He was enthusiastically received by the Unitarian body, and his presence, and the interesting statements which he gave of the results of his labours in America, awakened an earnest desire for the establishment of a "Ministry at Large" for the special benefit of those who were out of the reach of the ordinary ministrations of our Churches, and whose abodes were to be found in the most wretched streets, and the darkest alleys of our great cities. Dr. TUCKERMAN may be

said to have been the first to direct attention to the urgent necessity of a distinct religious agency of this kind, and to secure for it a place amongst the recognised institutions by means of which it is sought to raise, and improve, and regenerate, what was once looked upon as the hopeless portion of society. And to his counsel and example we are certainly indebted for the establishment of such a ministry in connection with our congregations. It was commenced in the metropolis under the direction of the Unitarian Association. But experience soon showed that it would require a separate organization for the guidance and care of so important a work, and the London Domestic Mission Society was established. In the formation of this Society Mr. MADGE took a very lively interest, and, in 1839, he preached before its supporters and friends in the Jewin Street Chapel, an admirable sermon on the means of improving the condition of the people. On this discourse he himself, perhaps, was disposed to set a higher value than on any other that he delivered. The subject was one to which he gave his most serious thought, and, throughout, it is imbued with the spirit of love, and

of power, and of a sound mind. He spoke in it of the evil of indiscriminate charity, pointed out that the improvement of the moral condition of the poor should be sought by surrounding them with motives and incitements to virtue and goodness, and by endeavouring to breathe into them new life and vigour. For this purpose, he contended, the most effective instrument is the gospel of Christ. And should it be alleged that provision is already made for dispensing this blessing, he insisted that it was altogether inadequate and disproportioned to the end in view :—

"Were the public places of worship numerous enough, and provided with sufficient accommodation for the reception of the great mass of the people, the teaching they would find there would be little adapted, in a great majority of cases, to elevate their minds, or to cleanse and purify their hearts. They require to be spoken to in a more direct and familiar manner, with a specific application to their peculiar circumstances, and an especial reference to their immediate necessities. Before you can impress them with the value of Christian wisdom,—before you can make them feel how rich a contribution the Gospel supplies to man's happiness and comfort,—before you can stamp upon their souls a sense of the glad tidings which it brings, or excite them to a perception of the prospects which it displays, you must remove from their intellectual eyesight the film that had been so long gathering over it, and call up that consciousness

of a higher life to which they have heretofore been so insensible. There are multitudes who do not seek the light and consolations of the Gospel, simply because they feel not the want of them. They have no desires, no inclinations, that find a congenial gratification in communion with its blessed truths, and that communion, therefore, is not the object of their pursuit. To make it so; to make them wish for the enjoyment of Christian hopes and Christian privileges; to make them feel how much they stand in need of its principles to support, and its promises to cheer, them in their weakness and in their sorrow; it is first necessary to excite the sensibilities of their minds, to give life and tenderness to the conscience, and to rouse into animation the dormant affections of their souls. Many are they who require that the Gospel should be taken to them, before they will feel any impulse to come for it to us. By going to them, and exhibiting it in all its plainness and simplicity,—by making it speak intelligibly and affectingly to their souls, addressing them as weak, mortal, dying beings; proffering them help, pardon, peace, and deliverance, you may not unfrequently renew a right spirit within them,—take away the stony heart, and give in its place a heart of flesh. *Now* they are heedless of its blessings, and indifferent to its promises, because ignorant of the value of the one, and feeling not the need which they have of the other. There must be thousands of families in different quarters of this great city, who are scarcely ever brought within the reach of Christian instruction or Christian influences. They are a class by themselves. They associate with none but those of the same manners and morals with themselves; and the question is—Shall nothing be

done to bring this class out of their present miserable condition, into one more hopeful and elevating? I am aware of the difficulty—the exceeding difficulty—of doing this; but to say that any thing is done towards it by throwing open the doors of our churches, and inviting the people to come in, is childish and absurd. Multiply the number of churches tenfold, and unless, by previous culture, you have imbued the minds of the people with intellectual desires and moral tastes, unless you have made them feel, by first exciting, and calling out, the wants of their spiritual nature, your provision for Christian instruction, as far at least as they are concerned, will amount to little or nothing. The only way of reaching the minds and hearts of large numbers of the community is, by going, in the spirit of Christianity, to their homes, and talking plainly and feelingly of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. This, however, is a service, the due performance of which, requires a ministry dedicated and devoted expressly to the purpose. * * * I confess I know of no other way in which we can contribute our due share of labour to the necessary and important work of bettering the condition of our poorer fellow-men."

The congregation over which Mr. MADGE presided sustained a great loss in the year 1839 by the death of EDGAR TAYLOR, Esq., at the early age of forty-six. Of him it was truly remarked that few men had ever lived more usefully or died more lamented. He was one of the TAYLOR family of Norwich,

with whom Mr. MADGE was so intimately associated, and an eminent lawyer. A firm and uncompromising Nonconformist, he took an active part in the promotion of such measures as affected the civil and religious rights of Dissenters, more particularly of the body with which he was connected. Though much occupied with the cares and duties of a large professional practice, he found time for literary pursuits, and for those scriptural studies to which he was devoted. He was one of those learned and accomplished laymen who were often found in the English Presbyterian Churches, whose minds were actuated by a spirit of serious thoughtfulness, and who reverently but freely inquired and judged for themselves on subjects of religious belief. Mr. EDGAR TAYLOR'S interest in these solemn and sacred matters was fully equal to that of the divine. He was familiar with all that modern criticism and research had done to purify the Greek text of the New Testament, and during a long and painful illness found relief under its burdens in revising the authorized version. He had prepared the work for the press before his decease, and it was published after his de-

parture. As an aid to the right understanding of what Evangelists and Apostles wrote it is of great value, and may still be considered to hold a high place amongst similar productions. The removal of such a man, and so warm and kind a friend, was sincerely lamented by Mr. MADGE, and he preached a sermon the Sunday after the funeral, August 25, on the reasonableness and propriety of resignation to the will of God, and concluded thus:—

"In illustration of these remarks specific reference might be made to many of those with whom we once took sweet counsel and walked in company, but who are now at rest from their labours; and especially to one whose mortal remains have just been consigned to the grave. It is not my habit, as I believe you are aware, to pronounce from this place funeral orations; but I feel at the same time that it would not consist with a sense of justice and propriety to suffer such a man as our recently departed friend to pass away from the earth without one word expressive of the estimation in which he was held while living, and the grateful tender remembrance that follows him to the tomb. When I reflect on the course and conduct both of his public and private life, the useful benevolent industry that marked the season of his more active existence, and the patience, the resignation, the cheerfulness even with which he endured the hours,—the long and weary hours of pain and suffering;—when I call to mind the

intelligence, the judgment, the prudence and discretion which he exercised on all occasions where his advice was needed and sought for;—when I recollect the various contributions made by him, as well of knowledge and learning, as of judicious counsel and active labour to the cause of pure rational religion;—and when in addition to all this I take into account the consistency and harmony of his outward life with his inward convictions, with the principles which he avowed and professed, I feel that not only on private grounds have we reason to mourn the loss we have sustained, but that on public grounds also that loss is one which, by many at least, will be long and deeply regretted. If those who knew him best were called upon to mention any one virtue by which he was eminently distinguished, they would, I believe, concur in naming integrity. In determining whether he would pursue any particular course of conduct, or aim at any particular object, you had only to determine whether he would think that object right, and that course of conduct his duty. No mean passion, no sinister purpose, ever interfered to lead his judgment astray, or to give an unworthy bias to his decision. Every one felt with respect both to his professional and general character, that he could place the most perfect reliance upon his truth, sincerity, and consistency.

"In saying thus much I may, perhaps, have departed somewhat from my usual practice, but I felt that in the present instance some little offering to the memory of him whom we have lost,—some slight expression of the regard in which, I believe, he was universally held, was due alike to our common sympathies, and the virtues by which his character was

adorned. Let me add, that I cannot wish better for yourselves, or for the society to which you belong, than that you may resemble our departed friend in his reverence for the truths of religion, and in his irreproachable and excellent conduct. I cannot wish better for yourselves, or for those who are interested in your happiness, than that in the hour of sickness and of suffering, you may display the same unruffled composure, may leave behind you as fair a claim to grateful affectionate remembrance, and share with him, in that eternal reward which, I trust, he will finally receive in that world where dwell for ever the spirits of the just.

* * * * * *

His body has been buried in peace,—returning to the dust from whence it came,—but we know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day. While the hour of mercy lasts, let us so live that when we come to die, we may die the death of the righteous, and that our last end may be like theirs. May God incline our hearts to keep his law;—that law by the keeping of which we shall be best fitted for the purest communion with one another in this world, and for rejoining in heaven the society of those who through faith and patience are now inheriting the promises!"

It had been the habit of Mr. BELSHAM, for many years, to give expositions of the Scriptures and courses of lectures to young persons after the usual morning service. This practice was likewise adopted by Mr. MADGE, and he thus added to the labours and increased the value of his ministry. The lectures

were well attended, and afforded to many most useful religious instruction.* His book on High Church principles first existed in this form; and it is, probably, the work by which he will be longest remembered. It bears the marks of his correct and graceful diction, and presents a powerful vindication of pure Christianity from any supposed alliance with priestly ideas, and ecclesiastical assumptions. It was called forth by the publication of the celebrated "Tracts for the Times;" and

* A lady who heard most of these lectures, and remembers with deep interest the pleasure and benefit she derived from them, has kindly copied from the notes she made at the time, the following list of lectures delivered by Mr. Madge after the usual morning services during several years; and she tells me that the chapel was often crowded, and that many barristers never failed to attend on such occasions.

Subjects of Lectures by the Rev. T. Madge:—

1831. On the Unity of God.

1834. On the Objections generally raised Against Unitarian Christianity, viz.:—1, on the Charge of Schism; 2, on the Thirty-nine Articles; 3, on the Right of Unitarians to the Name of Christian; 4, on Plenary Inspiration; 5, on Setting Aside Everything that is Mysterious; 6, on the Interpretation of Scripture; 7, on What is Termed the Mutilation of the Bible; 8, on Unitarian Christianity not being a New Doctrine; 9, Concluding and Summary Lecture of this Course.

1835. On the Atonement.

1837. On the History of the Christian Church.

1838. On Natural Religion.

1839. On the Evidences of Christianity.

anyone who would have a true perception of the tendency of the spirit of Sacerdotalism, as fostered and commended by what is called the Anglican School of Theology, should read the "Lectures on Puseyism,"* by Mr. MADGE. If in a few passages he should think them severe, he will see that it is only in the manly exposure and denunciation of arrogance and superstition; and must admit that they are singularly free from bigotry and exaggeration. Mr. MADGE received many thanks from men in the National Church for these Lectures. Lord, then Mr. MACAULAY, and (1844) member for Edinburgh, wrote from the House of Commons to inform him that he had received the volume, and adds, "From the glance I have given to the contents, I am sure that I shall read the whole with pleasure and profit." The late Lord MELBOURNE, who was a great reader of theological books, and well acquainted with the history of the English Presbyterian Churches, informed Mr. MADGE that he had perused the lectures

* Mr. Madge meant nothing offensive by the adoption of this title. The party in the Church to whom the Lectures referred were commonly known as Puseyites; and the peculiar opinions maintained by them were designated by the term Puseyism. It was used, therefore, for the sake of convenience, and to avoid circumlocution.

twice with entire satisfaction, and that he was rejoiced to be introduced to the author of a work so timely and so unanswerable.

From Mrs. JOANNA BAILLIE Mr. MADGE received the following letter:—

HAMPSTEAD, *March* 20.

DEAR SIR,

I was very much gratified a short time since in receiving a copy of your Lectures on Puseyism, but have delayed acknowledging your great kindness till I should read through the book, which, having been hindered in many ways, I could not accomplish till last night. I beg now to offer you my best thanks for the honour of receiving from you such a present, and for the great satisfaction and instruction I have derived from it. Your account of the writings of the Fathers, &c., is so clear, and your arguments drawn from it so forcible, that I cannot conceive how any person of common sense, after reading them, could for one moment suppose that tradition should be regarded as of equal authority with the New Testament. I thought it very extraordinary before I read your Lectures, and doubly, trebly so since I have read them. I hope this excellent work will be much read, and have all the success in opening people's eyes to the truth which it appears to me to deserve. I grieve to think how many excellent men, and clever men, in general estimation, lean to the Puseyite side, and try to be as charitable to them as I can—try to think them sincere, though bewildered.

I remain, dear Sir,

Your truly obliged servant,

J. BAILLIE.

It may appear to some that the course of theological opinion in the Established Church need not trouble Dissenters, and that they should not interfere with it. But such a view is at once erroneous and dangerous. The nation supports this Church at a vast expense, and the tone and character of its teaching are very intimately associated with the moral and spiritual well-being of the people of England. The compulsive conformity and submission claimed for the Church by the authors of the "Tracts for the Times," and their party, and their open and undisguised advocacy of the principle of persecution were utterly incompatible with the sacred rights of conscience. They not only insisted that the civil magistrate might reasonably restrain those who sought to propagate heretical opinions, by temporal penalties, but that they should be visited with the severest punishment. "In this," said their leader, "lies the difference between the treatment due to an individual in error, and to one who is confident enough to publish his innovations. The former claims from us the most affectionate sympathy and the most considerate attention; the latter should meet with no mercy. He assumes

the office of the tempter, and so far forth as his error goes, must be dealt with by the competent authority, as if he were embodied evil."* "The fiercest inquisitor" Mr. MADGE justly said, "could not have used language more intolerable,—more hateful than this,—or have set up for himself a defence which would better subserve his malignant and cruel purposes." And seeing that the endowments of the National Church were thus employed by a party within its walls in a manner adverse to Protestantism, and so as to support some of the worst delusions of Popery, the eloquent minister of Essex Street Chapel faithfully pointed out the danger of the principles which were then propagated with so much zeal and ability, and which have since been so greatly extended through the country. The words with which he closes his first Lecture were such as became one in the line of a truly Apostolic succession, and they deserve to be seriously pondered now. In referring to the views and pretensions to which he was opposed, and speaking of those who advanced them, he said, "One would suppose that, like the augurs of old, they could not, when met together in friendly converse,

* J. H. NEWMAN.—Arians of 4th Century, p. 134.

look each other in the face without smiling. But we are assured that they are in earnest, and in earnest therefore we will meet them. The worst feature belonging to their system is the threatening aspect which it casts upon our civil and religious privileges. It denies and denounces liberty of conscience, and the right of private judgment. If it could obtain the power, it lacks not the will to curb and restrain both. It becomes us, then, to be on our guard, and to remember that our security consists in our sensitiveness to the approach of danger. Our religious liberty cannot be preserved without constant watchfulness. If we sleep the enemy will come and sow tares. If we are careless and indifferent about our religious privileges, we shall forge the fetters of our own bondage, and shall only want, what our indifference will well deserve, a tyrant to come and fasten them upon us. Let us, therefore, look to ourselves, and take heed to our ways. Let us resolve never again to be entangled with the yoke of bondage, but steadily to maintain, and finally to hold fast the liberty with which Christ has made us free!"

Amongst the friendships which Mr. MADGE

formed at Norwich, none were more cherished by him, and none were more valuable to his family, than those by which he was intimately associated with Mr. and Mrs. J. WITHERS DOWSON. To his children especially they were most affectionate and kind. His second son, TRAVERS, who was trained for his own profession, was frequently with them in his boyhood, and during his college life. And afterwards, whenever he was laid aside from the benevolent labours in which he delighted, he, for the most part, made their home his own; and no parents were ever more devoted to a son.

The following letter is from Mr. MADGE to Mr. DOWSON. It was written in reply to an invitation to visit him, and indicates how pleasant were the relations in which they stood to one another :—

"LONDON, *January 13th*, 1840.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I know not how to express my sense of your great kindness in inviting me down to Bracondale. I assure you that if at this moment it were practicable and convenient I should not hesitate to accept a proposal which would lead to so much real enjoyment. My engagements, however, are of such a kind as (except in a case of absolute necessity) to confine me to London. It is true I have been suffering a

good deal lately from a species of headache, to which I have not before been accustomed, but I have little doubt of its being a rheumatic affection arising from cold, as since the weather has become somewhat milder I have been less troubled with it. I am sorry that TRAVERS should have said anything about it, as I fear it may have led you to think that I am more of an invalid than is the fact. At the same time it is not unpleasant to be assured of the ready sympathy of those whose friendship and regard we prize and cherish. I am so sensible of the care and good nursing which would attend me in your house, and of the various ways in which you would *both* minister to my happiness and comfort, that it is not without the greatest reluctance I say no to your proposal. Be not surprised, however, if at some future time, and when circumstances are more propitious, I should unexpectedly make my appearance at your door and put to the test your hospitality and your patience.

"Accept for yourself and Mrs. DOWSON the greetings of the season, and believe them to come from a heart deeply impressed with a grateful recollection of all your kindness, and full of the warmest wishes for your happiness.

"I am, dear Sir, your obliged and faithful friend,

"THOMAS MADGE.

"It gives me much pleasure to hear with what great satisfaction and interest the services of your new minister* are received. I wish I could be a hearer among you for a Sunday or two. Perhaps some months hence I may."

* Rev. JOSEPH CROMPTON.

Mr. MADGE's daughter AMELIA had been a joy to him from her birth,—a stream of pure sunshine upon his path. That sunshine was now about to be clouded by anxiety concerning her health, but it was only about her health. In all other respects, in her mind, in her character, in everything which is not made subject to decay or death, she was all that he could desire, what he delighted to see, and what, as he was told by a friend after her departure, he would ever have comfort in remembering her. The sickness which preceded her dissolution was long, and the cause of much grief to her father. He took her to Torquay one winter, and sent her to Madeira another, in the hope that the consumptive tendencies which were perceived might be checked. But it was of no avail. The disease which is so fatal to the young and the promising could not be arrested, and in the year 1845 she was taken from him. The stroke was a painful one. She was tenderly attached to her father, and had been, after her mother's death, his constant companion; and her opening womanhood was full of sweet promise. She was educated at Mrs. CARPENTER'S school, and I have heard much from friends in Bristol,

—and more particularly from Mr.* and Miss ESTLIN, by whom she was greatly regarded, of the amiability of her disposition, and the love which she inspired. Mr. MADGE never alluded to her without emotion, and when he looked forward to his own dissolution, it was a comfort to him to think that he should be laid in the same grave with her.

As the winter of 1840 approached, it was found necessary that she should leave London. When this was known it was at once determined by a few of the members of Essex Street Chapel that, as a mark of their sympathy with her, and of the high estimation in which Mr. MADGE was held, the expenses incident to the journey should be borne by them. And accordingly the sum of one hundred and sixty pounds was sent to her by an old and valued friend, JAMES BISCHOFF, Esq., accompanied with affectionate wishes for her recovery. This unexpected and handsome present was a pleasant surprise, and as a proof of the

* The late J. B. ESTLIN, Esq., of Bristol, an eminent surgeon, and one of the kindest and most benevolent men I have ever known. His only daughter was at school with Miss MADGE, and her dear friend. And so interested was Mr. ESTLIN in her case, that he went with Mr. MADGE to Torquay purposely to see her, and to give her the benefit of his professional advice.

regard cherished for her father by his friends, it was, as she stated, most grateful to the feelings of his daughter. He was himself much moved by it, and wrote at once to Mr. BISCHOFF, to express his sense of this fresh token of respect and kindness:—

"HIGHBURY GRANGE, *December 7th*, 1840,
"*Tuesday Evening.*

"MY DEAR SIR,

"I cannot, before leaving home, resist the inclination which urges me to an immediate and grateful acknowledgement of the great generosity of my friends, as made known to me in the note addressed to my daughter. This expression of their sympathy, at such a time as the present, deeply affects us both. I wish I could convey to you an adequate impression of the sense which we entertain of such considerate kindness; but I cannot, and have therefore only to hope that it will, in some degree, be manifested by more earnest endeavours on my part faithfully to discharge towards them the various duties of pastor and friend. You have not mentioned the names of those to whom I am thus indebted. Perhaps you would not wish to do so. This therefore I leave to your own discretion, requesting you at the same time to assure them of the feelings of more than gratitude which have been awakened in my heart. One purpose designed by them will certainly be answered. It will make my dear AMELIA less scrupulous in procuring for herself many of those conveniences and comforts which, though perhaps not absolutely necessary, may

and I trust *will* largely conduce to hasten the period of her recovery.

"To yourself, dear Sir, allow me to say that I not only feel to be under the greatest obligation for the part you have taken on the present occasion, but also for a number of most friendly attentions and services, so cordially rendered by you and the other branches of your family. That every blessing may attend both you and them is the sincere and earnest prayer of your, and their faithful and obliged friend,

"THOMAS MADGE."

The change thus sought was attended with benefit, but it was found desirable the next season again to seek a softer climate, and Mrs. WITHERS DOWSON then kindly offered to accompany Miss MADGE to Torquay. The following letters shew how deeply Mr. MADGE was touched by this evidence of her attachment. He writes from

"HIGHBURY GRANGE, *November 26th*,
"*Friday Afternoon.*

"MY DEAR MRS. DOWSON,

"Your and Mr. DOWSON'S letter has just been brought to me, and I cannot rest a moment without thanking you both from the bottom of my heart for the kind proposal contained in it. What friends you are! And what comfort, in the midst of all one's anxieties, does such generous sympathy impart! Much, however, as I am gratified with such a token of your regard, and gladly as on many accounts I should be disposed to accept your offer, I cannot endure the

thought of separating you from your home, and of thereby inflicting such a deprivation upon yourself and Mr. DOWSON. At present it is quite undetermined where my dear child is to winter. We have not yet seen Sir J. CLARK again, but are to do so early next week. Then I suppose something as to her future residence will be fixed on. Madeira is no doubt the place to be preferred,—having regard to the climate only,—but to this there are so many and such formidable objections, and especially taking into account the lateness of the season, that the thought of going *there* seems for the present to be abandoned. Lisbon has also been mentioned, and Mr. R. KINDER, who went there on account of his health, speaks highly of the climate and of the benefit he received from it. Others again whom I have consulted express a different opinion, and think the climate unsuitable to one like AMELIA. Here indeed is the difficulty. What is recommended by one I find disapproved by another. This disagreement of opinion involves me in great perplexity. After all I should not be surprised if some spot in Devon or Cornwall (Torquay or Penzance) were selected for the winter. This to dear AMELIA and myself would be the most acceptable, as it would admit of my occasionally going to see her.

* * * * * *

"My dear Mrs. DOWSON, on one condition *only* should AMELIA *not* go out of England, could I think of your accompanying her, and that is, an assurance from your medical attendant that the change would be beneficial to yourself. That indeed might reconcile our minds to a measure which we could not otherwise consent to. I am sure that AMELIA, no more than myself, could feel happy in the thought of having withdrawn you from your own home, *unless* we felt that

such a sacrifice would be followed by an improvement in the state of your own health. In such a case I need not say how glad AMELIA would be to have you for her companion, or how satisfactory it would be to me to know that she had so kind and watchful a friend near her. Next week I hope that our plans for the future will be more settled. At all events as soon as they are you shall be made acquainted with them. I say nothing now of my own anxieties and fears, for you may well imagine what they are, but I cannot conclude without begging you and Mr. DOWSON to receive the acknowledgment of my deepest gratitude for the disinterested and extraordinary kindness evinced by you and him. God bless and reward you both.

"Ever most faithfully yours,

"THOMAS MADGE."

A few days afterwards he wrote to Mr. DOWSON on the same subject. The letter is dated

"HIGHBURY GRANGE, *November 30th.*

"MY DEAR SIR,

"Though in my letter to Mrs. DOWSON I have already expressed the deep and grateful sense I entertain of your kindness as well as hers in the proposal made to me regarding AMELIA, I cannot feel satisfied without a line addressed directly to yourself, assuring you that I am fully aware of the sacrifice which you have so generously offered to make in resigning for a season the companionship of your dear and excellent wife. We have been told by mutual friends that Mrs. DOWSON would really be very likely to receive much

benefit from a temporary sojourn in a milder and more genial climate. If it be so, something of the reluctance which we feel in separating her from you would be removed, and we would fain hope that your generous self-denial would be repaid by the renovated health and strength which she would thus gain.

"I have now to inform you that we saw Sir J. CLARK yesterday, and Torquay in Devonshire was then fixed upon for AMELIA'S winter quarters. The day of our departure, as far as we can at present foresee, will be Wednesday (to-morrow) week, December 8th. Should Mrs. DOWSON resolve upon accompanying us, we hope she will come up to London a few days before, and then she will have an opportunity of seeing something of her brothers before she goes. If you determine upon coming to London with her I need not say how glad we shall be to see you. * *

"I expect to get a supply for my pulpit for two Sundays, which will not only enable me to go down to Torquay but to stay there a week or ten days, and see Mrs. DOWSON and AMELIA well settled in lodgings before I leave them. The dear girl remains much the same as when I last wrote: I trust she is, in no respect, at all worse. With the prospect of such a companion as she is likely to have, the thought of a winter's separation from home sits lightly upon her spirits.

"I continue to receive good tidings from both Manchester and Liverpool. Both FRED and TRAVERS are giving me by their conduct much satisfaction and comfort. They write often and most affectionately to each of us.

"Ever your and Mrs. DOWSON'S faithful and affectionate friend,

"THOMAS MADGE."

The mild air of Devonshire had a beneficial effect in checking the progress of the disease, and Miss MADGE returned home in improved health. But as soon as the cold weather again came on, it was deemed desirable that she should once more be placed under the influences of a more balmy clime, and she was sent to Madeira. Her father was distressed on account of the distance at which she was removed from him, but felt that the trial must be borne in the hope that it might be productive of the desired end. A letter which he sent to Mrs. DOWSON, when it was found desirable that the residence in Madeira should be prolonged, will shew the state of his mind at that time. It was written from

"HIGHBURY GRANGE, *April* 10*th*, 1843.

"MY DEAR MRS. DOWSON,—

"I hope you will not think me insensible to your very great kindness because I have suffered two or three days to go by without acknowledging it. Indeed you would do me injustice by such a supposition. Your letter and Mr. DOWSON'S reached me in the midst of my busy preparation for the Sunday—rendered more than usually busy by getting ready a lecture to be delivered after the morning service, on a subject which required so much reading and consideration that I had literally, throughout the week,

and more especially towards the close of it, not a moment to spare for anything else. This, and this alone, be assured, was the occasion of one hour's delay in writing. Your expressions of sympathy on account of AMELIA'S postponed return to us are very welcome. In any of our troubles and disappointments it is some little comfort to feel that we are thought of and cared for by our friends. And I have had too much experience of the interest you are so good as to take in what nearly concerns me, not to know how true and genuine it is. I must confess to you that my disappointment in this matter is a very severe one. I had hoped for the dear child's return in another month or two, and had been thinking with delight of our approaching meeting. Accounts had given me reason to believe that though her cough was not subdued, her strength and general health were better. I therefore calculated that though Highbury might not be a fit residence for her during the winter, she might, as that season drew near, be under no necessity of removing further from me than Devonshire or Cornwall. It seems, however, that with the return of anything like cold wet weather comes an increase of cough and expectoration. This happened in the month of February, and was, I believe, the main cause of deciding the question of her further continuance in Madeira. The report of her physician there is not altogether so satisfactory as I could have desired. He says that she is better than she was, but that by further remaining in Madeira, and subsequent care, she may regain a certain degree of moderate health. This view of her case may not be more worthy of reliance than that of any other physician. At the same time it has added something to my anxiety

and fear, and will make me look with impatience for further accounts. I will, however, as dear TRAVERS says, endeavour to 'hope on,' and trust that my present disappointment will find its recompense in the good which it may eventually bring. I hope I need not say that neither you, nor Mr. DOWSON, nor his excellent mother, have been forgotten by me in the events through which you have lately passed. The hour of separation from those long honoured and loved, come when it may, even when age, infirmity, or other circumstancss render it desirable, can never be otherwise than an hour of bitterness. A void is created which cannot again be filled up. A loss is incurred which, in this world, can never be supplied. But as you have said, in other and better words than mine, there is above and around us, in the midst of all our trials and troubles, a guardian spirit and power, in whom we may place our trust, and trust in whom will breathe into our souls that peace which passeth all understanding. There *are* times when one feels all this—though on other occasions our natural weakness or the pressure of grief prevents our doing so. As friend after friend departs we become linked by new bonds of attachment and affection to the world to come, and we feel that as the enjoyments of time are taken away, the prospect of eternity becomes proportionably enriched. But wherefore should I talk to you thus? There is no one, dear Mrs. DOWSON, who understands, and who can teach these lessons better than you.

"I am happy to hear such good accounts of your mother, Mrs. DOWSON. She has well and faithfully fulfilled her part, and may well therefore possess her soul in peace and patience. May the remaining hours

of her twilight life be as serene and tranquil as they deserve to be!

"It will give me great pleasure, if so I can arrange my plans for the summer, to come down and spend a little time with you at Norwich. By so doing I shall be able to allow TRAVERS to be longer with you than I should otherwise like. Meanwhile accept my best thanks for all your kindness, and

"Believe me to be,

"Ever sincerely and affectionately yours,

"THOMAS MADGE."

In the year 1844, the ties of friendship, which were already very close, were drawn closer still between Mr. MADGE and the family of JAMES BISCHOFF, Esq., of Highbury Terrace, whose third daughter he married. Mr. BISCHOFF died before I was intimately acquainted with Mr. MADGE, but I knew his widow well in her beautiful old age, and the affectionate veneration in which she was held. She was of the family of STANSFELD, of Leeds, and a sister of JAMES STANSFELD, Esq., of Halifax, the father of the Right Hon. JAMES STANSFELD. Mr. MADGE esteemed her very highly, and in a sermon which he preached on occasion of her death, he spoke of her as one whose religion lay not in forms and professions. "It was to be seen in the noiseless tenour of

her way, and incorporated with her very nature. It showed itself in acts of kindness and mercy. Her heart had in it a spring of human sympathy which no increase of years could exhaust. The feelings of her youth remained with her to the last, so that her society, beyond that of most persons of her age, was welcomed by the young, and was never considered by them as any intrusion upon their cheerful hours, or their innocent amusements. In all things she was faithful to the end, and now that darkness has gathered over her mortal frame, a feeling of gratitude should rise up in the hearts of those who have been the objects of her care, or who have had before them the benefit of her example."

Mr. MADGE's second marriage was always viewed by him as one of the greatest blessings of his existence, and to it much of the peace, usefulness, and happiness of his latter years must be attributed. One child, to whom her father's memory is very dear, was the issue of this union, and she was given him, he gratefully said, at a time when he was called to bear the loss which he felt so severely of his daughter AMELIA. On her return from Madeira, it was seen

that the termination of her earthly existence was near. Life here had much for her that was attractive and desirable in connection with the bright and happy prospects which were before her, and she would have gladly remained with those to whom she was so dear. But when she saw that it was otherwise ordered, she calmly and patiently resigned her own will to that of God, and was full of cheerful hope and trust. It is often objected to Unitarianism that it has no consolation for the soul in the hour of death. The charge has no foundation, and the power of our holy faith to sustain and comfort under sickness, and in the near approach of dissolution, was strikingly seen in the undisturbed and blessed peace with which this young Unitarian Christian descended to the grave. The religion in which she had been brought up, and which she had heard her father preach and defend, was her perpetual solace and unfailing support. She retained her faculties to the last moment, and with her dying breath, and a smile upon her countenance which told of the heaven to which she was going, assured those around her that all was well, and reminded them that in the brighter beyond they would meet again, and renew their intercourse, and enjoy

eternal communion. The actual state of her mind at this solemn crisis will be seen in the touching words which I have now before me, and which were penned only thirteen days before she died. They form part of a letter to Mr. WITHERS DOWSON, in which she inquires for a dear friend with whose condition he was acquainted, and of whom she had heard that her end was near. She asks,—

"Is this the case? I write to you for information, because it would be a great satisfaction to hear about my dear friend who seems to be treading the path to the next happy world almost in company with me. We shall go from one happy home to another, still under the same kind care,—and that care the best and highest. Oh! why, therefore, should we mourn for ourselves? Rather mourn for those we leave on earth!"

To such pure and holy souls death is indeed an angel of mercy, conducting them to the nearer presence of Christ and of God, and to the blissful employments and associations of the life immortal!

It was about this time that Mr. MADGE was called to bear trial and disappointment of a different kind, caused by the determination of his son, who had just finished his College course, not to take charge

of a congregation. TRAVERS MADGE, whose self-denying life, gentle spirit, and devoted labours, as a philanthropist, are now widely known, seemed to be in heart and head so peculiarly qualified for the work of the Christian ministry,—so called to it by the Spirit of God, that every one to whom he was known, anticipated for him a career of great acceptance in this sacred vocation. But conscientious scruples respecting a paid ministry, and a wish for greater freedom of action than he imagined he should possess as a stated pastor, induced him to decline the particular work for which he was designed,—though in real Christian service he ministered incessantly, whilst strength was granted him. This decision, was much lamented by Mr. MADGE. With a full knowledge of his temperament and tendencies he foresaw, perhaps, that the course which TRAVERS had chosen was not good for him, whether mentally or physically regarded. He longed to see those powers, from which so much had been expected, exerted in a different sphere, and one in which they would have had scope, as he believed, for a more healthy development. But never for a moment did he doubt the pure and lofty motives by which his saintly son

was guided. And amidst all the changes of opinions, and of plans, which subsequently transpired in his career, their confidence in, and their affection for each other were never seriously disturbed.

When the sad tidings reached England of the death of Dr. CHANNING Mr. MADGE delivered a discourse from the pulpit of Essex Street Chapel, in which he delineated the character and spoke of the reverence in which he held the name and talents of the great American divine, and of the obligations under which he had laid Unitarian Christians, for the manner in which he had advocated their principles, and exhibited the vital spirit and elevating influence of their faith. It was a sermon worthy of the solemn occasion. In speaking of the importance of the testimony which was borne by such a mind to the truth and value of Unitarianism, and of the fact that Dr. CHANNING had been educated in the Trinitarian faith, Mr. MADGE observes:—

"Now, that such a mind as Dr. CHANNING'S should have been so impressed with the evidence in favour of Unitarian Christianity as to yield up to it all the prejudices and prepossessions of his earlier years, is a fact well worthy of our serious consideration. I know and freely admit that not upon the ground of any human authority, however high, should the

truth of our opinions be made to rest. Still it is impossible not to feel that there is much weight in the testimony borne to them by one whose intellect was so clear and mighty, whose heart was so warm and pure, and whose conscience was so awake, so sensitively awake, to every call of principle and duty. Yes, I do and shall contend, that when such a man, with no sinister motive to urge, nay, with every earthly motive to restrain him, embraces a faith like ours, so stigmatized and denounced, so scorned and hated, it is a phenomenon not easily to be accounted for, except by concessions and admissions fatal to the cause of its opponents.

"When we hear it said that Unitarianism is a cold, cheerless, heartless system, imparting neither wisdom to the understanding nor warmth and vigour to the soul, I would ask, what then was it that won the assent and gained the attachment of such men as MILTON, LOCKE, NEWTON, PRIESTLEY, and now, CHANNING? Turn to the writings of this last-mentioned confessor, muse upon the noble thoughts and the fine sentiments that are so thickly spread over his pages, and then say, whether *these* can come out of a cold and heartless system; whether *these* can be the fruits of a faith which neither invigorates the understanding, nor elevates and sanctifies the heart? Assuredly, if the strains of intense feeling, earnest conviction, deep love, fervent piety, lofty and inspiring hope, are to be heard anywhere, they are to be heard flowing from harps attuned and harmonised by the genius of CHANNING. His own high character, his own pure mind, his own profoundly religious and disinterested soul is a guarantee to us that not for one moment would he have listened to reasons and arguments in favour of a doctrine that

ministered neither elevation to the mind nor peace to the conscience. Nothing could have drawn such a man towards the Unitarian faith, had he not found in it views and sentiments in unison with and answering to his own virtuous and devout sympathies. The only conceivable source of attraction to him was its truth, its purity, its accordance with the dictates of reason, the character of God, and the teachings of Christ. No other cause but this can be fairly assigned for the revolution which took place in his religious opinions. His mind was of a nature so thoroughly imbued with a love of the great, the beautiful, and the good, that had he seen anything of littleness or narrowness in the faith which he afterwards embraced,—anything deadening or depressing in its influences,—anything tending to the encouragement of low views of morality and piety, of the authority of God or the ministry of Christ, he would have spurned it from him with an instant and disdainful rejection. If, then, amid the discouragements which are so often presenting themselves, we are sometimes tempted to doubt whether ours can be the truth of God, let us call to mind the great and good men, the first and noblest of our race, who have given their verdict in favour of our cause. Let us think of the cloud of witnesses by which we are surrounded, of those who have lived and laboured, and of those who have suffered and died for it; and, in comparison with the weight of their unbiassed and impartial suffrage, that of those who have deserted from our ranks may well be accounted as the light dust in the balance."

CHAPTER VIII.

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LIFE AND MINISTRY IN LONDON, FROM 1846 TO 1859.

IT was Mr. MADGE's happiness, during his protracted residence in the metropolis, to maintain a cordial and fraternal intercourse with his brethren in the ministry. For the judgment and talents of the Rev. ROBERT ASPLAND, of Hackney, he had the highest respect, and in losing him he felt that the Unitarian Church had been deprived of one of its ablest advocates. When, after a long and trying illness, the end came, at the request of Mr. ASPLAND's family, the funeral sermon was preached, January 11, 1846, by Mr. MADGE; and, choosing for his subject the memory of the righteous dead, he spoke in glowing terms of the character and varied powers and labours of his beloved friend. Even then

he felt the sorrow which attends advancing life, as the circle of the friends of earlier years becomes smaller, and we miss the familiar forms we have been accustomed to meet, and the faces that have been wont to beam upon us in love. "How fast," said he, as he ended his discourse, "are we following one after another to that bourne whence no traveller returneth. How many of those with whom we were wont to take sweet counsel and rejoice in their companionship are now assembled in the world of spirits! Where our treasures are, there should our hearts be also! They cannot come again to us, but we shall go to them. How soon is known only to Him who hath the times and the seasons in His own power. The summons of our departure may even now have gone forth. The Angel of Death may now be on his way to mark us for his own. But whether early or late, in the morning, noon, or evening of life, the event is equally certain, and demands from us the same preparation. Meanwhile, let us comfort ourselves with the assurance that the souls of the righteous are in the hands of God, and that He will keep the sacred deposit committed to him till that day, when the bondage of

the grave shall be broken, and death shall be swallowed up in victory!"

On the 20th of July, 1848, many friends of religious freedom met together, on the west side of Gordon Square, to witness the laying of the foundation-stone of University Hall. The occasion was one of unusual interest. An Act had been passed by the Legislature, commonly known as the Dissenters' Chapels Bill, having primarily for its object the protection of Unitarian Christians in the peaceful possession of their places of worship and burial-grounds, and the properties attached to them, but which was also felt to be a great triumph achieved on behalf of the cause of religious liberty in relation to all sects and parties. Those who had been most actively engaged in promoting this measure, desired that some substantial memorial should be raised which would show succeeding generations their deep sense of its value. The monument, it was finally determined, should be an institution, broad and Catholic in its spirit, and open to all students resorting to it, without the imposition of any religious test. And as soon as the necessary arrangements were made for commencing the building, the Council requested Mr. MADGE to give an

address on the importance of making provision in the Hall for instruction in theology and morals, and to implore for the work the Divine blessing when the foundation-stone was laid. The address and prayer were printed with the addresses delivered at the same time by MARK PHILIPS, Esq., and Professor NEWMAN,—the first Principal of the Hall. Mr. MADGE'S remarks applied almost exclusively to the topic assigned him. He insisted, with his accustomed earnestness, that religious instruction should form a part of Academical education, and that theology should be ranked amongst the highest and noblest of human studies.

"Without touching upon the value and importance of religious knowledge in connection with man's eternal welfare, the subject is one, nevertheless, which has so many relations with the history of the world, the progress of the human mind, the state of society, the usages and habits of different nations, that no education can well be considered accomplished and complete in which it has been neglected and disregarded. Putting out of view, also, the question of the divine authority of the Scriptures, and looking at them merely as human compositions, we should still be without excuse in treating them with carelessness and indifference. When we consider that in them are to be found some of the oldest writings in the world,—that they present us with compositions as fine as ever dropped from the pen of

man,—that they contain many admirable principles and maxims for the guidance and regulation of human conduct, and that to the wise and good of all ages they have been as a fountain from which they have drawn large draughts of light and wisdom and strength, they deserve as well as demand from us thoughtful, diligent, careful consideration and regard. To investigate their meaning, to distinguish their peculiarities, and to unfold their beauties, while it will call into exercise all the faculties of our minds, will reward that exercise with a wiser understanding, and a fuller comprehension of the truths contained in them, together with a keener relish and enjoyment of those rich forms of thought and expression, those immortal strains of eloquence and poetry by which they are distinguished. Then, again, is not the agency of Christianity visible in the literature, the arts, the laws, the institutions of every country calling itself civilized? Is not its empire continually enlarging, and its influence everywhere operating? And shall the books containing the only authentic record of its origin and character be thrown aside as unworthy of our attention? Not so have thought the greatest and best men of whom our conntry can boast; men who were the lights of the age in which they lived, and will be so of ages yet to come. To the subject of theology,—to the consideration of the Christian religion, and the volume in which it is enshrined, they devoted years of laborious and patient thought, and have left behind them strong testimony to the value and benefit of the employment. Those illustrious men, HALE, and BOYLE, and MILTON, and NEWTON, and LOCKE, and HARTLEY, together with many others but little inferior to them,—all laymen, observe, and therefore swayed by no professional bias,—looked

upon theology as among the first of human studies, regarding it as their privilege as well as their duty to engage in inquiries and contemplations of so interesting and elevating a nature. And if men of their stamp and genius, to whom was given so much of 'the vision and faculty divine,' instead of treating the subject of theology with neglect, held it in the highest estimation, bringing to its exposition and illustration the fruits of their genius and the treasures of their learning; shall we presume to banish it from the circle of our studies as undeserving a place in our thoughts and meditations? Listen once more to the testimony of a man richly endowed and amply qualified to pronounce an opinion upon the subject. 'I have,' says Sir WILLIAM JONES, 'regularly and attentively read the Holy Scriptures, and am of opinion that this volume, independently of its divine origin, contains more true sublimity, more exquisite beauty, more pure morality, more important history, and finer poetry and eloquence, than all other books, in whatever age or language they may have been written.'

"I know that theology and religion are not to be confounded, and that there may be much acquaintance with the one without any deep feeling or impression of the other. But though theological knowledge is not necessarily connected with the religious life, there can be no religious life apart from all connection with theology. There must underlie our religious sentiments and feelings some principles or doctrines on which they rest, and by which they are supported and sustained. There must, in the mind of every man, be lodged some notions of God, and of the character of God, and of the relation subsisting between the creature and the Creator, or religion will be but a mere name.

Theology, therefore, can never be otherwise than a subject of great interest and importance, seeing how much it influences the character and complexion of our religion; determining, for the most part, whether it shall move in a right or wrong direction; whether it shall operate for good or for evil."

From his reputation and position in the Unitarian body Mr. MADGE was often called upon to preach at the opening of chapels, and many of our modern places of worship were dedicated by him to sacred uses.* On no such occasion did he acquit himself to greater advantage than at the opening of Hope Street Church, Liverpool, in the year 1849. The invitation which he had received years before from the religious society by whose members this fine and costly structure was raised, and the affectionate regard which he had so long cherished for the Rev. JAMES MARTINEAU, under whose ministry it was built, gave a peculiar character to the duty in which he was engaged, and enabled him to discharge it with more than ordinary effect. A very large and crowded congregation listened to him with the closest attention, whilst he pointed out the objects which

* I have no means of ascertaining on how many occasions Mr. MADGE was engaged in this particular duty. He kept no record of his services.

should be sought in entering the Christian temple, and the need of external help and support such as its services imparted. In the evening the event was celebrated by a *Soirée,* at which about nine hundred persons were present. In responding to the vote of thanks which was given him for his "interesting and powerful sermon," Mr. MADGE thanked the meeting for the manner in which his services had been noticed, and congratulated the members of the Hope Street congregation on the beauty of the house of prayer which they had erected. His speech on this occasion was reported at tolerable length, and affords a favourable impression of his manner of addressing a public meeting. He said :—

"If, in the discourse delivered by me this morning, it has been my good fortune to have said anything which rightly interpreted your own views, and was in unison with your own feelings, it is to me a source of sincere gratification. In accepting the invitation with which you honoured me to preach the first sermon in your new church, I confess I did it with many doubts and misgivings as to the fitness of your choice. And if, therefore, I have not altogether disappointed your expectations, I shall, indeed, be glad that to those doubts and misgivings I did not give way, but that I came hither to take the part which I have done, and to welcome my friend and brother to the

new scene of his public labours. I am sure that both to you and to him this must be a day of complacency and satisfaction. *You*, the members of the Hope Street congregation, cannot but feel happy in having had the will and the power to erect so fair and elegant a structure for your future house of prayer; and your minister cannot but feel equally happy in the thought that he has come back to renew his ministry among a people who are fully sensible of the value of his services, and who have given this proof, not only of the zeal and interest which they feel in the cause of rational religion, but of their attachment to him by whom its outward ministrations on their behalf are conducted. Allow me to say also that I think you have done well in departing from the style of architecture so much in vogue with our Presbyterian forefathers, and in aiming at something more graceful and becoming than the red-brick parallelograms to which they so generally adhered. They saw that religion was too often buried under a load of ceremony and outward show; and, in their indignation at this, they were led into the other extreme, and stripped it bare of almost every thing that appeared ornamental and beautiful. While I say, however, that in this respect, you have done well in departing from the fashion of our Nonconformist ancestors, I must, at the same time, add that we shall do any thing but well if we depart from that spirit of honesty and independence, of superiority to the world and the world's laws, of which they have left us such memorable examples. True—they may have entertained opinions which to us appear exceedingly erroneous, and they may have felt scruples about many things which to us appear insignificant and trifling. These, however, are small matters compared with that

pure spirit of integrity—that indomitable love of Truth and confidence in the God of Truth, which sustained and cheered them in the midst of the many painful and costly sacrifices which, for conscience' sake, they so readily and courageously made. It was this—the devotion of their minds and hearts to what they thought right and good, that constituted the solid and enduring fabric of their fame. And if we value the freedom which we now possess—if the rights of conscience are now more generally admitted—if we can sit under our own vine and under our own fig-tree, without let or hindrance, thinking freely, and freely professing what we think,—it becomes us to bear in mind that for these great blessings we are largely indebted to the integrity and firmness of that illustrious race of men to whom I am now referring. Justly proud may we be of possessing so virtuous and noble an ancestry; nor can I breathe a better prayer for us all than that the spirit which prompted and guided them may still live in and animate the breasts of their descendants. Having made these few observations, which I trust will not be deemed altogether inappropriate at this time, I beg again to express my admiration of the beautiful building in which we have this day worshipped, as well as of the generous and earnest spirit to which it owes its existence. May you, my friends, long live to assemble, as humble and devout worshippers, within its walls, and derive from its various services all the support and comfort which they are designed and calculated to impart. And may my friend, your valued minister, be blessed with health and strength to continue his devoted labours among you,—to instruct you by his wisdom, and to charm you with his eloquence. I say this in all sincerity, notwithstanding the differences

of opinion which may exist between us—differences which I would fain believe affect only the outworks of our faith, and not the sacred truths enshrined within. I should, indeed, be ashamed of myself if I suffered those differences, were they even greater than they are, to render me less sensible of his great powers and endowments,—of the riches and graces of his mind, or of the fidelity which he carries with him into all his studies and pursuits. You may well suppose that it is with feelings of no common interest that I have witnessed and shared in the proceedings of this day, when I tell you that my acquaintance with him and my regard for him is now of very long standing,—going back to the very first years of my own ministerial life, and that with the family, of which he is so honoured a member, are associated many of the dearest and tenderest memories that are lodged in my bosom."

The Rev. JAMES MARTINEAU, who followed Mr. MADGE, referring to the thousand things which crowded upon his mind and heart, and made the day one which must be inscribed with a bright joy in the annals of his life, observed that one of its most marked features had been the opportunity afforded him of meeting Mr. MADGE, whose persuasive tongue had charmed and delighted those who had heard him; and added, "I cannot describe to any one who is not keenly alive to the recollections of early life the kind of emotions which the tones of that dear voice

awaken in me; and I cannot, therefore, expect that others should share all the delight and interest with which I have listened to his sermon to-day."*

In the spring of the year 1850, Mr MADGE, at the urgent solicitation of friends, and by permission of the Council, delivered a course of fourteen lectures at University Hall, on the Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion. These lectures were designed for the benefit of Lay Students at the Hall; but they were open to others, and the audiences were numerous throughout. They were given on successive Wednesday evenings, and were admirable for their candour, for the arguments by which they were sustained, and for the beauty of their illustrations. They were so highly commended by one who heard them to the Earl of ZETLAND, that he was induced to go to Essex Street Chapel; and so much approved by him were the services there, that he afterwards attended them regularly, with Lady ZETLAND, whenever he was in London. Lady ZETLAND was a woman of noble and generous spirit, and showed Mr. MADGE much kindness until her death, which took place about two years before his own.

* "Christian Reformer,' 1849.

The Committee of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association paid Mr. MADGE the compliment of asking him to preach a second time at its anniversary in the year 1852, and one of the largest congregations ever known at a meeting of this Society assembled to hear him. The subject of the sermon was, "One God the Father, the doctrine of Christ and his Apostles." And fervently did the preacher exhort Unitarian Christians to be consistent and zealous in its propagation. He was aware that it would be the last time in which he would be called to conduct such a service, and shunned not to declare "the whole counsel of God," as he understood it. The discourse was regarded, in many respects, as a most important one. How clear and forcible are the following passages :—

"With many theologians of the present day,—while they allow that the three first gospels have nothing in them opposed to the strict doctrine of the Divine Unity, —it is the fashion to maintain that it is otherwise with respect to the writings of the two Apostles, John and Paul. Here, say they, are traces to be found of another doctrine, of that which is assimilated to the Deity of Christ. Now granting that there is a shade of obscurity hanging over a few passages in the gospel of the one, and that a few ill-understood figures of speech occur

in the Epistles of the other, it is a striking and remarkable circumstance that the books of the New Testament, which carry with them the strongest and most decided testimony in favour of the doctrine of the text, are precisely those which are inscribed with the names of John and Paul. It is in the gospel of John that Jesus is made to say, My Father is greater than I. It is in the gospel of John that the true worshippers are declared to be they who worship the Father in spirit and in truth. It is in the gospel of John that our Lord addresses the Father as the only true God. It is in the gospel of John that we read of his disclaiming any higher title than that of Son of God. It is in the gospel of John that we are told of his forbidding his disciples to pray to him, but to address their supplications to the Father through him. It is in the gospel of John that we find him assuring his brethren, just before his ascension into heaven, that he had the same God and Father in common with them. And finally the Apostle John himself, as if to prevent all misinterpretation of his language, expressly declares, towards the conclusion of his gospel, that his object in writing it was to prove that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God.

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"What I have said of the Apostle John may be said also with equal justice of the Apostle Paul. He too speaks of Christ in terms which clearly imply that he is not what the so-called orthodox represent him to be. It is Paul who writes, To us there is but one God, the Father. It is Paul who says there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. It is Paul who announces that as by man came death, by man came also the resurrection

of the dead. It is Paul who says of Christ that for his obedience unto death, even the death of the cross, God hath highly exalted him and given him a name above every name. It is Paul who declares that as the head of every man is Christ, so the head of Christ is God. It is Paul who asserts that Christ is the first-born of every creature or the chief of the whole creation, and that he was anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows. And it is Paul who, in one of the most striking passages of that most eloquent and beautiful chapter, the fifteenth of the first Epistle to the Corinthians, proclaims that the time cometh when Christ, having subdued all things to himself, shall become subject to God, even the Father, that God may be all in all. It is hardly possible for words to set forth more plainly and powerfully the sole Godhead and supremacy of the Father than those which are here adopted by him. If the Apostle had designed to set at naught all arguments for the Deity of Christ, I know not where he could have found any terms so well fitted for the purpose as those which he has actually employed. After speaking of Christ as the Son exercising sovereignty over a kingdom in which all things were to be brought under his sway and control, he then adds, that when this great end is accomplished, this magnificent triumph is achieved, he, the Son, is to deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father, and to be himself subject unto him, that God may be all in all. In clearness, in force, in fulness of expression, what can go beyond this?"*

This sermon was subsequently delivered at Swansea, before the members of the West of

* One God the Father, pp. 21-23.

England and South Wales Book and Tract Society, and printed, and extensively circulated in several editions.

The visit to Swansea was much enjoyed by Mr. MADGE. He had never seen that part of Wales, and passed several days in partaking of the hospitality of the Rev. G. B. BROCK, who was then minister of the Swansea congregation, and in going to some of the most pleasant and picturesque spots in the neighbourhood. All who knew Mr. MADGE well must have been struck with his quick perception of the sublime and beautiful in nature. To behold a grand or lovely prospect was to him a positive delight. It was easy to perceive its soothing and exciting influence upon him. His sympathies and his admiration were soon awakened by the contemplation of the Divine works. He discerned the Creator, and was conscious of his nearness in them. From a child he had looked with joyful feelings on the outward universe, and in maturer life its objects became symbols to him of the more glorious and eternal realities which God has prepared for them that love him. He could truly say with the poet he so much admired :—

> For I have learned
> To look on nature, not as in the hour
> Of thoughtless youth; but hearing oftentimes
> The still sad music of humanity.
> . . . . And I have felt
> A presence that disturbs me with the joy
> Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
> Of something far more deeply interfused
> Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
> And the round ocean, and the living air,
> And the blue sky, and in the mind of man.

The Unitarians of England have often been charged with indifference to foreign missions. That they have not been prominent in sustaining them is undoubtedly true. This, however, has not arisen from any want of interest in the conversion of the heathen to Christianity, but is to be attributed rather to the fact that the energies and resources of Unitarian churches have been employed in their own country for the promotion of theological reform. To this work, it has appeared to them, they have been specially called, and to it their attention has therefore been chiefly directed. It is not meant that they have not also a moral and spiritual aim. Unitarianism, as a Christian agency, contemplates the regeneration of the soul, and the consequent devotion of the heart and life to God, as well as the diffusion of true

and scriptural views of the Divine nature and government. But persuaded that the power of an improved religious belief is necessary to bring the world into the state to which the gospel points, Unitarian Christians have given themselves mainly to the correction and removal of those errors popular in creeds and systems, which have been so great a hindrance to the progress of pure religion. Nor have they ever withheld their aid and sympathy from the friends of free and earnest inquiry in other lands. The British and Foreign Unitarian Association, as its name implies, is intended to encourage efforts for the spread of truth abroad as well as at home. When an application was made by several families resident in Sydney to the Committee of this Society to procure for them a suitable pastor, with a view to the establishment of Divine worship in accordance with their own views, Mr. MADGE was much interested in the selection. The Rev. G. H. STANLEY, B.A., was at length chosen, in the year 1853, to fill this office. An impressive service was held in London, a few days before he sailed for Australia, in the Little Portland Street Chapel, and he was publicly recognized by brethren and friends in his new relation, and

the blessing of God invoked for him in the important field of labour on which he was about to enter. In this service Mr. MADGE was one of the officiating ministers, and asked Mr. STANLEY to state in the presence of those assembled the circumstances under which he had been led to seek such a mission, and addressing him observed,—

"In the request which I shall now make to you, it must not of course for a moment be supposed that I thereby assume any degree of priestly authority. My only object is to give you an opportunity of stating before this congregation the views which you entertain, and the motives by which you are animated, in the great and arduous undertaking in which you are about to engage. That the motives by which you are guided are of the purest kind, proceeding from an earnest desire to promote, as much as in you lies, the cause of Christian truth and righteousness,—to watch and labour for the spiritual and everlasting good of your fellow-men, in a region far remote from that in which your are now dwelling,—we are well assured, from the testimony borne to your personal character and ministerial services by those who have had the best means of knowing and judging of both. Allow me to add, that the sphere in which you are to labour is one which will require from you great earnestness and zeal, combined with no small degree of gentleness and patience, courage and resolution, in declaring what you believe to be the whole counsel of God, tempered with the moderation and meekness becoming the disciple of him who himself was meek and lowly

in heart. Accept my sincere and earnest wishes for the happiness and comfort of you and yours, and for your successful ministrations as a labourer in the vineyard of our common Master. May God give unto you the spirit of power, of love and of a sound mind! And may you be enabled, through success and disappointment, through evil report and good report, to persevere, in faith and hope, in the Christian work to which, in the providence of God, you are now called, and which I trust will contribute to the promotion of his glory, the good of your fellow-men, and the furtherance of the truth as it is in Jesus."

In the year 1853 Manchester New College was removed from Manchester to London, and, the year following, an earnest request was made to Mr. MADGE that he would deliver the address to the students after the annual examination. A large assembly of visitors filled the spacious room in University Hall, and before he proceeded to discharge the duty which he had undertaken Mr. MADGE said:—

"Allow me to congratulate this meeting upon our coming together within these walls under auspices which give to our College the promise not only of continued, but increased vitality and usefulness. That it has in times past, and when differently located, rendered good service to the cause of truth and righteousness, you will, I doubt not, be ready to admit. That it may go on to do so, and to a far greater extent than it has yet done,—that it may be

instrumental in training up and sending into the world able, learned, well-furnished men, thoroughly accomplished for advancing the interests of pure and undefiled religion, is, I am assured, the desire of us all, and one, I trust, which we may hopefully cherish."

The address to the students was full of wise and just counsel, and in all respects suited to the occasion. As it may be said to contain his matured thoughts, and to embody the results of his long and varied experience on the ministrations of the pulpit, it may not unsuitably form a part of the permanent records of his life and teaching. After adverting to the many and great advantages enjoyed in the College for acquiring the learning and information necessary to qualify for the Christian ministry, he said :—

"But learning and information, however profound and extensive, are, as you must be aware, not the only, though most important qualifications for the efficient discharge of the functions of the Christian ministry, especially as exercised among Unitarian Dissenters. I would not alarm you by exaggerating the difficulties which you will probably have to encounter, or the self-denials and privations to which you may have to submit. If I refer to them at all, it is only for the purpose of impressing upon your minds that, unless the path in which you propose to walk has been chosen by you from a conviction that it is one where your hearts and affections go along with you, and in which

you believe that you can best serve the cause of God and of man,—unless these, or considerations like these, have been the guiding and governing motives of your choice, you will find the course to which it leads a tedious and an irksome one, and you will be little able to meet, with becoming patience, firmness and resignation, the difficulties and discouragements that may possibly await you. It should not be taken up, therefore, as a mere business or profession, but as a work, a great and noble work, to which, by the voice within you, you have been summoned to devote yourselves. It may be that some men are moved to engage in it on lower grounds,—because of the position in society which it may chance to give them, or from the facilities afforded by it for the indulgence of their literary tastes and inclinations. While such attractions are not without their influence even upon the purest and best-disposed minds, care should be taken, by scrutinizing closely the motives of our conduct, that they are not the dominant and presiding ones, and that our determination has been mainly the result of real religious earnestness.

"Given, then, the requisite knowledge and the right disposition, what else is needed for the efficient discharge of the duties of the Christian ministry? The first that I shall mention is the ability to communicate in speech that which we are desirous of imparting to others,—the power of giving distinct utterance to the thoughts that are within us. Our information may be large and exact; our inclinations and dispositions just what they ought to be; still, if, through some organic defect, or the want of due attention to the point, we fail of giving to our words their full and appropriate expression, we ought not to be surprised at the little

effect produced by them. Hence the great importance of a clear, distinct enunciation,—of so giving out what we have to say, that it may easily reach the ear of the listener, and make it next to impossible that it should be misunderstood. To a speaker, this is not only desirable, but the one thing essential to the end in view. Without this, important as may be the matter of his discourse, and beautiful as may be the language in which it is clothed, little or no impression will be made by it. Often has it been mentioned, in terms of sincere regret, that such and such a sermon was not better delivered. By the discerning few, it was seen to possess great intrinsic excellence; but, by the many, that excellence, owing to the circumstance just alluded to, was scarcely perceived, or but very slightly felt. There was no modulation of the voice, no proper intonation, no emphasis to mark and bring out the sense; but one continuous monotonous sound, which fell dead upon the ear without leaving a trace behind. In insisting upon this point as one of considerable importance to a preacher, do not suppose that I would have you cultivate a formal, measured, artificial mode of address. Let the manner be your own. Let it be perfectly natural. Anything savouring of affectation, or that is not in harmony with your general bearing and expression, is sure to offend every man of sound judgment and good taste. Avoid what is vulgar; correct what is faulty; speak plainly and intelligibly; and then, as to the rest, obey freely the genuine impulses of your nature.

"Much stress has lately been laid upon the great advantage of extempore preaching. No doubt, where this can be done with ease and readiness, it is a very effective mode of address; but I agree with Mr.

KENRICK* in regarding it as a special grace, conferred upon comparatively few, at least in such a manner as to render its exercise agreeable and satisfactory to those who are addressed. That it is not at all essential to the general acceptableness of a preacher, is shewn by the example of such men as Dr. CHALMERS, Mr. IRVING in his earlier and best days, and Mr. MELVILL,† all of whom preached from written discourses, and were as popular and acceptable with all classes of people as any I have ever heard. But then they *were speakers,* and not mere readers. They did not hold down their heads and fix their eyes upon the paper

* The Rev. JOHN KENRICK, M.A., F.S.A.

† The Rev. HENRY MELVILL, who was a Canon of St. Paul's Cathedral, and has recently died. He was so popular as a preacher that at the Tuesday Golden Lecture at St. Margaret's, Lothbury, crowds of hearers left their business in the middle of the day to listen to his discourses. He also preached before the House of Commons at the end of the Crimean war, and with such effect as to draw forth high praise from Lord PALMERSTON and Mr. DISRAELI, by whom the thanks of Parliament were proposed to him for his service. He read his sermons, but they were prepared with great care, written out twice, it is said, with his own hand, and then very clearly transcribed, by another, for more easy delivery. This perfect acquaintance with what he had written was one secret of his power. It is too often forgotten that familiarity with the manuscript should be secured, if it is to be read with facility in the pulpit. In addition to the time employed in its composition, a diligent preparation of at least three hours should be given, it has been stated by one who has had much experience as a preacher, to the study of a written discourse before it is delivered. And in committing it to paper, it is desirable that there should not be too many lines on a page, and that the eye should be able to observe quickly the prominent words. In this way very much of the advantage of extempore preaching will be obtained, with the comfort and correctness, and more careful thought, of the written sermon.

before them, but looked up and around them, and gave effect to what they were saying by an unconstrained and animated delivery. It is also necessary, if you would make others feel, that you should *yourselves* feel. Be sincere; be earnest; shew that you are deeply interested in what you are saying, and you will be sure to draw towards you the sympathies of your audience. If, indeed, man were a being of pure uncompounded intellect, it would be sufficient to speak to his understanding only; but as he is made up of imagination and passion as well as reason, the one should be attended to and cared for as well as the other. No part of our nature is to be neglected. Our heads and our hearts, our judgments and our consciences—all are to be appealed to as witnesses for God and goodness. A politic man, says Lord BACON, may write from his brain without touch and sense of his heart, but a feeling Christian will express in his words a character of zeal or love.

"I know full well, my friends, how much more easy it is to give advice than to follow it; to say what ought to be done than to do it. At the same time, I must say, that I am not conscious of having, in any of the foregoing remarks, proposed what is at all impracticable or very difficult of attainment. It is but to be simple and true in word and deed, in speaking and acting, and the desired end is accomplished.

"Having thus far dwelt chiefly upon what is necessary to give due effect to the ministrations of the pulpit, allow me a few words respecting the subjects which appear to me most fitting to be there introduced. Now these all range within the circle of our Christian faith. Let the gospel of Christ be set forth in all its fulness, in all its rich provision for our moral and

spiritual wants—as it relates to God and man, to our condition as mortal and immortal beings, as it respects the duties enjoined upon us and the sins to be repented of, the affections which we should cherish and the feelings to be guarded against,—let these, in all their connections and ramifications, be the themes of the preacher's discourse. They lie within his legitimate province. He has to enlighten, sanctify, and make wise to salvation. Avoiding scholastic phraseology and metaphysical subtleties, let him dwell upon the character of God, his moral government, his watchful providence, his all-pervading presence. Let him treat of the mission and ministry of Christ, of the virtues and perfections that adorned and glorified his life, of the glad tidings which he brought to all people, of his sufferings on the cross, of his triumph over death and the grave. Let him insist upon the necessity of holiness, the conditions of pardon, the realities of futurity, and the solemnities of the final judgment. These, and not mystic theories and fanciful speculations, are the subjects to make men wise and virtuous and good. There is not, it must be confessed, much of absolute novelty to be displayed here; but old and familiar truths may be made interesting and impressive when uttered by a living voice, and coming up fresh and warm from the fountains of the heart.

"As in all likelihood you will have to sustain the office of the Christian ministry among Unitarians, I will take the liberty of stating briefly my opinion of the line of conduct which, in that relation, it may sometimes behove you to pursue. In preaching Christianity, in the exposition of its doctrines and duties, in shewing what it teaches us of God and of man, you cannot, in honesty and faithfulness, as long as your opinions

harmonize with it, do otherwise than preach Unitarian Christianity. It may be that the word Unitarian will scarcely ever drop from your lips. It may be that you will be content with inculcating what you regard as true, without any direct notice of what you hold to be false. On ordinary occasions and in the regular services of the pulpit, this may be sufficient. But it may not be so always. Circumstances may arise when loyalty to truth demands of you a divergence from this course of action. Your opinions, the opinions of the body with whom you are in closest sympathy and connection, are misunderstood and misrepresented. They are denounced and condemned as mischievous and anti-christian. Shall no voice be raised in their defence? Shall no effort be made to correct these misrepresentations, and to wipe off this stigma?

"Here is one case, I think, in which we are called upon to declare openly and distinctly what our belief really is, and the grounds on which it rests. Then the general prevalence of religious scepticism among the multitude furnishes another reason why we should exhibit to the view of our fellow-men what appears to us to be the truth as it is in Jesus, and the errors which have been grafted upon it. Infidelity is everywhere spreading its poison. Numbers of the people are casting off all belief in Christianity. They are alienated from it because of the repulsive form in which it is commonly represented to them. They will not accept a religion which does violence alike to their reason and their conscience. They revolt at a creed which demands the prostration of the understanding, and confounds the clearest moral distinctions. Under these circumstances, is it not incumbent upon us to shew that the corruptions of Christianity have been mistaken

for Christianity itself, and then to hold up those truer and nobler views of it which are calculated to arrest the progress of infidelity, and to reconcile men to the acceptance of the claims and truths of the gospel? Are we not bound to make the faith appear honourable, to shew that genuine Christianity is a system in which absurdity and belief are not united together, that earnest and tranquil faith in its divine origin may exist without the sacrifice of our rational nature, and that the gospel offers to our reception doctrines concerning the attributes of the Creator and the expectations of the creature, alike welcome to the reason, the conscience and the heart?

"There are other matters to be noticed, if time allowed, which, though subordinate to those already mentioned, are nevertheless of some importance, and may operate beneficially or otherwise upon your ministerial career. I allude to the part which you may have to take in the political and social relations and changes of life. Whatever in these connections you may be led to do, see to it that nothing be done which is inconsistent with your character as Christians and your position as Christian ministers. Neither would I have you overlook or neglect the cultivation of that degree of refinement and those gentlemanly manners which, while they will fit you for the society and companionship of the highest as of the humblest ranks, will add not a little to those means of usefulness which the greater endowments will have given you, and may, peradventure, render somewhat more interesting and acceptable your public ministrations.

"Pardon me if in the course of these remarks I have trangressed any of the proprieties of this occasion. And now I would sum up all that I have said, by

urging you to continue your diligent preparation for the sacred office you are destined to fill, to make the cultivation of a devout spirit one of your constant cares, to cherish an earnest and ardent love of truth, and to keep ever in view the end for which the instructions of this place are designed to fit you. In conclusion, accept my best wishes for your welfare and usefulness. May you fulfil the best hopes and expectations that are entertained of you, and be instruments in the hands of God of extending the empire of truth and righteousness, of charity, peace and good-will among men!"*

Mr. MADGE was not a voluminous writer. His publications consist, for the most part, of sermons delivered on special occasions.† The circumstances attending one of these occasions were peculiarly interesting. In commemoration of the hundredth year from the date of the opening of the Octagon Chapel, Norwich, suitable services were conducted and meetings held on the 11th and 12th of May, 1856. This spacious and beautiful house of prayer was set apart for

* Mr. MADGE again addressed the students after the examination in 1861. As an old York man, he took a warm interest in the College, and was always glad to see the students, and to hear of their welfare.

† He contributed occasionally to the Periodicals connected with the Unitarian body. And in the "Monthly Repository" and "Christian Reformer" will be found many articles from his pen.

divine worship on the 12th of May, 1756, by Dr. JOHN TAYLOR, the distinguished scholar and divine, for whom it was built; and three generations of his descendants united in the centenary celebration.* The preacher in the morning was the Rev. THOMAS MADGE, and in the evening the Rev. JAMES MARTINEAU; and a deep impression was produced by both. Never, it is said, was either preacher heard

* The year after the chapel was opened JOHN WESLEY was at Norwich. In his journal, under the date of December 23, 1757, he observes:—"I was shewn Dr. TAYLOR'S new meeting-house, perhaps the most elegant one in Europe. It is eight square, built of the finest brick, with sixteen sash windows below, as many above, and eight skylights in the dome, which indeed are purely ornamental. The inside is finished in the highest taste, and is as clean as any gentleman's saloon. The communion table is fine mahogany; the very latches of the pew-doors are polished brass." WESLEY'S Works, vol. 3, pp. 315, 332.

WESLEY esteemed Dr. TAYLOR "as a person of uncommon sense and learning," but he had written against his work on Original Sin, and was opposed to his theological views. And after having seen the Octagon, and described its elegance, he asks, "How can it be thought that the old, coarse gospel should find admission here?" It was certainly "the old" gospel that Dr. TAYLOR endeavoured to teach, and "not any schemes or opinions of men." His desire was that "we may all so seriously, closely, impartially, peacefully, and in the spirit of love study the scriptures, that our knowledge of the principles being just, our faith may be strong, our hope steadfast, our comfort solid, and that the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, shining into our minds, may give us a conformity to the Son of God in all virtue, in meekness, humility, and brotherly kindness, that so an entrance may be ministered unto us abundantly into his everlasting kingdom."—TAYLOR'S Scripture Doctrine of Original Sin, p. vi.

to greater advantage. One who was present states that when, after the morning service, more than eight hundred voices united in singing PIERPONT'S beautiful hymn—

> "O Thou to whom in ancient time
> The lyre of Hebrew bards was strung,
> Whom kings adored in song sublime,
> And prophets praised with glowing tongue!"

the effect was most striking.

Mr. MADGE chose for the subject of his discourse, "Christ the Foundation," and his aim was to shew that upon this, and not on any human foundation, the faith of those rested by whom the building in which they were assembled was raised. Whatever changes or modifications might have taken place in the religious opinions of successive bodies of worshippers, the condition of Christian fellowship, he said, remained unaltered. No test had ever been imposed there, no confession of belief made necessary to membership. Throughout the century which had passed since the first congregation met within the walls of the sacred edifice for prayer, all that had been done in relation to its services, and by its ministers, had taken place in the exercise of the spiritual freedom which had been inherited from Presbyterian ancestors, and

cherished as one of the most precious of their legacies. Those ancestors had been among the first in modern times to stand upon the broad ground of the common rights of Christians, and to protest against the imposition of a creed as preliminary to the enjoyment of Christian privileges. To preserve this liberty for themselves, and to hand it down to their descendants, they had founded the Octagon Chapel. And in the commemoration of that event, Mr. MADGE said, "We may be considered as commemorating also the great principle which should be recognized and held sacred by every church taking upon itself the name of Christ."* When he had finished his sermon he further remarked,—

"And now, my Christian friends, having brought this imperfect address to a close, I cannot sit down without adverting for a moment to the time when it was my pleasure and my duty to conduct the devotional

* Mr. MADGE knew well that the *first* English Presbyterians were not to be vindicated from the charge of spiritual domination. Claiming religious liberty for themselves, he remarked in this sermon, they turned traitors to it in the conduct which they observed towards others. CALAMY, in preaching before the members of the House of Commons, told them that it was their duty to suppress the errors and heresies that were spread abroad in the kingdom. And BAXTER declared that he abhorred unlimited toleration for all. And in this temper the Presbyterians

services of this place, and to speak to those who then assembled here of the things pertaining to life and godliness, as they are presented to us in the gospel of Christ. From that period to the present, the years that have intervened are many, and the changes that have taken place are great. I look around me, and see but few of the faces that then cheered me by their presence. Friends with whom it was my happiness to hold frequent and familiar converse have, most of them, passed away from the earth, where we shall see and know them no more; but they have not left us without the hope of meeting again in another world, to renew the inter-

continued from the time of the first CHARLES down almost to the period of the Revolution. "It was early in the eighteenth century," Mr. MADGE went on to state, "that a new and more liberal spirit began to display itself. With correcter views of the nature and design of religion, with purer and juster conceptions of the character and will of God, they saw more clearly into the rights, the duties, and the obligations of man. They felt the force of the Apostle's language when expostulating with the bigots of his day, 'Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God. Who art thou that judgest another? Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.' Studying in the school of Christ with minds in a great degree liberated from the trammels of hereditary creeds, they acquired a better knowledge of human nature and of the respect that is due to it. They came to the conviction that conscience is a sacred enclosure set apart and consecrated to the service of the Most High, and that upon this hallowed ground the foot of man has no right to tread. Hence the important change that was gradually introduced into the practice of their churches. Christian membership was no longer confined to those only who could pronounce the old-established Shibboleth. Admission was freely granted to every one who acknowledged Jesus to be the Christ, and the barriers that had been raised up around the Table of the Lord were thrown down and swept away. Thenceforth open communion was the declared order and practice of their churches."

courses in which we have delighted here. Let this be to us a source of consolation and comfort amidst the many vicissitudes of life and the constant inroads of death. But in reverting to the days and scenes of the past, so many heart-touching memories are awakened within me, that I cannot trust myself with more than this very brief allusion to them; and since it may not be my lot often, if ever, again to speak to you from this place, allow me to add my best wishes for your peace and prosperity as a Christian Church. May you ever keep in mind the holy purposes for which this house of prayer was at first erected! May the ministrations of religion be blessed to your real and lasting welfare, and when these your earthly Sabbaths are brought to an end, may you rise to the celebration of that more glorious and eternal Sabbath which remaineth for the people of God!"

Mr. MADGE was not fond of public business, but he took part in the administration of several of the charities, served on the committees of various societies, connected with the Unitarian body, and willingly gave his advice and rendered his assistance whenever he thought that he could in this way be useful. He was one of the distributors, under her Majesty's Government, of the annual Parliamentary Bounty to Indigent Dissenting Ministers, until it was discontinued; and he never confined it to any section of Nonconformists, but gladly afforded help to any

one who appealed to him, irrespective of name or creed.

Of the ancient and important Trust established by Dr. DANIEL WILLIAMS, the founder of the valuable library which bears his name, Mr. MADGE was a member for many years, and was present at a meeting of the trustees not long before his death. Even at an age when he might have pleaded that the time for repose from exertion had come, he worked equally with younger men in the courses of lectures for which arrangements were made by the London District Unitarian Society at its formation, and which were delivered in different parts of the metropolis, attracting, in many instances, very large audiences. One of a series of lectures addressed to Secularists was given by Mr. MADGE, "On the Christian View of Human Life and Destiny." Mr. HOLYOAKE, in the "Reasoner" of May 20, 1855, mentions this lecture very favourably, and says that it was "charmingly expressed, spoken in the silveriest of tones, and delivered with remarkable energy." The Rev. EDMUND KELL, of Southampton, states that he too has a vivid recollection of some doctrinal sermons which were given at Newport, in the Isle of Wight, under the sanction of the British

and Foreign Unitarian Association, and the Southern Unitarian Society, in which Mr. MADGE engaged, to the great delight of his hearers, and discoursed on the legitimate use and exercise of reason in matters of religion. Whether in London or the country, as long as his strength allowed, his brethren never found him unwilling to respond to their request for pulpit aid, and he was always received with pleasure and heard with satisfaction.

In the proceedings of the Independents and Baptists, with respect to the Orphan School, which owed its existence and support to the united efforts and contributions of the London Dissenters, Mr. MADGE coöperated heartily with those who sought to prevent the triumph of intolerance. The ministers of the English Presbyterian, or Unitarian body, were, until 1834, accustomed, with their Orthodox brethren, to conduct, in rotation, a Sunday service at the Institution, for the benefit of the children. Bigotry at length grew uneasy under such catholicity of action, and was enabled, unfortunately, to put an end to it. The pulpit was closed against Unitarian ministers, on the ground that their religious opinions were not in harmony with those of the greater number of the subscribers, and

the broad foundation on which the school was originally established was utterly disregarded. In consequence of this betrayal of the principles of religious liberty, and repeated violations of the understanding on which the union of the Three Denominations was formed, but especially the exclusion, by a majority of the body of ministers, of the Rev. Dr. REES, who had held the office of secretary for seven years, simply because they had determined to be represented by a secretary whose theological views were in unison with their own,—the Unitarian members of the body, who inherited the name, and contended for the freedom of the English Presbyterians, I believe, with one exception,* withdrew from an association in which they conceived true independence could no longer be enjoyed. This was not done without much careful consideration and deep regret. But it was felt that there could be no reliance,—or none such as would be requisite to earnest and successful coöperation,—on those who had so deliberatly broken their engagements, and that to act with them further would be neither practical nor expedient. In looking back upon the decision thus arrived at, its wisdom and

* The Rev. JAMES YATES, M.A., who afterwards retired from the ministry.

justice can hardly be questioned. It was a painful, but held to be an imperative, duty by the Presbyterian or Unitarian members of the body, and they did it with firmness and dignity, disavowing all angry and hostile feelings, and tendering to the other two denominations sincere wishes for their usefulness in the cause of freedom, truth, and virtue.*

From the Revolution of 1688 the ministers of the Three Denominations of London Nonconformists had acted together for the protection of the civil rights of Dissenters. Their union had been productive of great advantage to themselves, and to the extension of religious liberty. But when the Unitarian ministers found that this union could no longer be truly maintained, because the engagement not to interfere with each other's doctrines was disregarded, they at once informed the Government of their withdrawal from the Baptists and Independents, and of the reasons which had compelled them to take this course, and claimed the same privileges for themselves which they possessed when connected with the general body. One of these privileges was that of addressing the Sovereign on the

* Memoir of Rev. R. ASPLAND, p. 532.

Throne in their separate capacity. Difficulties arose in relation to the settlement of this matter, but Lord HOLLAND, Lord MELBOURNE, and Earl, then Lord JOHN RUSSELL, most kindly sympathized with the claim which had been made, and to them, and to the untiring and judicious exertions of the Rev. ROBERT ASPLAND, the Presbyterian (Unitarian) ministers in and near London were granted the access to the Throne which they had before enjoyed as one of the three denominations. As a member of this body, Mr. MADGE was often appointed the reader when addresses were presented to the Queen, and his admirable elocution never failed to strike those who heard him. The most impressive occasion, perhaps, on which he was called to perform this duty was during the war in the Crimea, when the great feeling with which he read the passage in the address referring to the personal sympathy which her Majesty had shewn towards her brave soldiers is still distinctly recollected. He read the address when the Princess Royal was married to the Crown Prince of Prussia; and again, after the marriage of the Prince of Wales, the address to the Princess of Wales at Marlborough House. On the latter occasion his

mind had been anxiously exercised just before on business which had required much care and attention, and he omitted to hand the address to her Royal Highness after reading it; nor did he notice that the Princess held out to him the reply which had been prepared for her, but which she did not read. A little incident then occurred which he frequently recalled afterwards. Finding that he was retiring from the position in which he had stood whilst he read, her Royal Highness, in the most natural and graceful manner, came forward, and gave him the answer which he should have remembered that he was to receive.

In the year 1857-8, when Mr. Alderman WILLIAM LAWRENCE was Sheriff of London and Middlesex, he appointed Mr. MADGE his chaplain, and, in this capacity, he said grace at the inauguration banquet, was presented to the Queen, and attended all the State ceremonials.* Five years afterwards he again filled the same office, when the present Sir JAMES CLARKE

* Mr. Alderman LAWRENCE, the excellent father of Mr. Alderman WILLIAM LAWRENCE, when he was Sheriff of London in 1849-50, appointed the Rev. D. DAVISON, of Jewin Street Chapel, his chaplain, and it is believed that this was the first time a Dissenting minister had ever been placed in this position by a Sheriff of London.

LAWRENCE was Sheriff. The regard thus shewn to their venerable pastor by his friends is not mentioned on account of any dignity that was conferred upon him by this mark of kindness and respect. But I think it right that it should be recorded, because it is not sufficiently remembered, perhaps, how frequently the Unitarian minister, from the place he fills as the leader in a cause that is unpopular, has to occupy an isolated position, and is excluded from public sympathy and attention which are freely awarded to the clergy of other churches. Often, indeed, is he shunned as dangerous by those who dread the supposed heresy which he teaches, or treated with coldness because of his dissent. He may well, therefore, expect from laymen of wealth and influence in his own communion, that they should cordially and liberally give him all the aid which they can render, and the encouragement which it is in their power to afford, whether in the way of social kindness or of public countenance and support. When this is generously and consistently done it deserves to be admired and commended. The recompense is one to which a faithful minister is entitled, and by it he will be animated and sustained in his labours.

At the earnest request of the Rev. R. BROOK ASPLAND and the members of his congregation, Mr. MADGE consented to preach at the opening of the new Unitarian Church, Hackney. The service took place on Thursday, March 25, 1858, and there was a very crowded audience. The prayer of dedication was offered by Mr. ASPLAND, and the object of Mr. MADGE in his sermon, from John iv., 23, was to shew that to the Father alone should religious worship be offered. The discourse was said, by one who was present on the occasion, to have been characterized by closeness of reasoning, aptness of scripture illustration and fervency of thought, and to have been delivered with the simple earnestness which marked all Mr. MADGE'S pulpit exercises, and with an elocution both musical and impressive. The Rev. JOHN GORDON, in speaking of the pleasure with which he had heard it, remarked, that whilst he was listening to the preacher he felt a passing wonder that any man who was a Christian could be any any other than a Unitarian; the argument was so clear and direct and unanswerable. But it was still more delightful to him, he added, on account of the manner in which

it was turned into devotion, and made promotive of practical and religious interests.

In acknowledging the thanks which were gratefully presented to him for his discourse, Mr. MADGE said that in considering on what subject he should speak, he remembered the objection felt by many persons to the introduction of controversial topics on such occasions, and that he himself in some degree admitted its justice. But when he reflected on the indifference manifested by many Unitarians to their distinctive principles, and the facility with which they slide into fashionable comformity, he threw away all doubts, and resolved to dwell on the great and impregnable truth on which the Unitarian Church is founded. He thought also that strangers would be present, and knowing how gross are the misconceptions that exist as to the Unitarian doctrine, it appeared to him that it would be a suitable opportunity for correcting false impressions, and pointing out that Unitarian worship is that which is enjoined by Jesus Christ himself, and sanctioned by his example; and that strong as it is in reason, it is not less powerfully sustained by scripture. Thus earnestly and impressively did the

venerable servant of God bear testimony to the truth and value of his religious convictions. The form of doctrine which he had embraced in his youth, with ripened experience and a profounder acquaintance with the Bible, became more and more dear to him as he drew nearer to the heavenly world. And his desire naturally was, that the faith from which he had derived so much benefit himself should be embraced in larger measure by others.

The pain of parting with friends and fellow-labourers was always acutely felt by Mr. MADGE, and he had often to bear it. He survived most of those who welcomed him to London, and his brother ministers, one after another, passed on before him to the better country—even the heavenly. When the Rev. EDWARD TAGART, for whom he had a warm regard, died, in the vigour of life, in the autumn of the year 1858, on his way from Hungary, having kindly undertaken, and ably executed, a mission to the Unitarian churches of that country, Mr. MADGE spoke the words of consolation to his mourning family and bereaved congregation which he was so well able to speak. The tenderness and delicacy by which he was characterised peculiarly qualified him

for such a duty. And in this instance he knew how dear the husband and father had been in his home, and how truly the departure of the pastor was lamented by his flock, and by the religious body for whom he had so long and so perseveringly acted in many ways, but especially as the Secretary of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association. Having alluded to the respect in which he was held when living, and the sorrow which was felt on account of his death, and the many obligations under which he had laid his congregation by his faihtful and valuable services, Mr. MADGE said :—

"We read in Scripture, and if we did not read it there our own experience would tell us, that we know not what a day may bring forth. Seldom has that lesson been brought home to us more impressively and affectingly than by the event which has made this house of prayer a house of mourning also. Not many days have passed since we were thinking, with no little interest and pleasure, of the re-appearance among us of our departed friend, after the visit, so promptly and lovingly undertaken by him, which he had made to our co-religionists in Transylvania. The time of his return was close at hand, when suddenly there came the stunning announcement that death had seized him on the way, and that, in this world, we should see his face no more. Of the deep sorrow and regret with which these sad tidings were received, it is unnecessary for me to speak. So wholly unlooked for were they, that

for a moment we were struck with a feeling of consternation and dismay. With fear and trembling we looked around upon the friends that remained, and whispered to ourselves, Who next shall be called to follow him ?

"Indifferent as for the most part we commonly are to the ordinary incidents of mortality, there are times and seasons when our indifference can no longer be maintained, and we are compelled by the force of our natural human sympathies to be serious and thoughtful. It would, I believe, be an act of injustice to any of you whom I now see before me, to suppose that your hearts have not been sensibly touched by this most unexpected bereavement, or that, at the present moment, any other feeling is stirring within you than that which befits the solemnity of the occasion. Of the character of our departed brother, now gone to his rest, I shall enter into no formal delineation, for I am sure you need it not. But considering the position which he occupied in our religious community, and more especially as the able and faithful minister of the congregation here assembling; considering how long you have enjoyed the benefit of his services, and how many must be the obligations you owe him,—I felt that it would not be meet to let such an event as that of his final separation from among us on earth, pass by without one little word of testimony to the regard in which he was held when living, and the sorrow that is felt now that he is no more. Let me say then thus much, that in every work in which he was called to engage, in whatever duty he had to discharge, there was a marked desire to act up to the purest standard of right; and every one felt that he could rely with perfect security upon his truth, sincerity, and con-

sistency. By the friends of that pure and rational form of Christianity which we have embraced, and to which he was so earnestly and warmly attached, he will ever be remembered with grateful pleasure, not only because his life was in harmony with the principles which he professed, but because, also, he was never backward in any service which it was in his power to render to those principles, either by judicious counsel or active personal exertions. Under the favourable circumstances which fell to his lot, he might, if he had so chosen, long since have retired from the arduous and often anxious duties of the ministerial office, and have passed his leisure in the gratification of his literary tastes. But instead of this, and in the desire of promoting as much as in him lay the cause of Christian truth and righteousness, he went labouring on in the exercise of the profession which he had early made his choice, and to which in after years he devoted the time and talents which God had given him. In addition to this, and with the same end in view, he undertook various other offices and trusts, which, though attended with an amount of toil, anxiety and care, not generally recognized, brought with it no other reward than the satisfaction arising from the consciousness of being employed in his Master's service. You cannot, my friends, better honour his memory than by converting your recollection of himself into a holy solicitude for your own true welfare, and by a more uniform devotion to those principles which guided his life and hallowed his death.

"To see the interior of a man's mind, we should follow him into his retirement, into the place of his daily and hourly converse. The veil which guards and protects the sanctity of home, it is not for us to attempt to draw aside. To its inmates alone is best known how

dear the home of our brother was made to them by his guardianship and care, and how much of the light that cheered it is now withdrawn. Happy in himself, in his family, in his friends, in his pursuits, and having with all this the means and appliances for the true and rational enjoyment of life, he might well and reasonably have wished for its continuance a while longer; nor was there apparently anything about him to forbid the hope that it might have been so. But it pleased God to order otherwise; and we must endeavour, meekly and trustingly, to resign ourselves to his will.

"Knowing not, then, my brethren, at what hour your Lord cometh, be ready whenever he cometh to meet him. I say not that you can meet him free from error and sin. Such exemption as this it is not for us, the frail children of mortality, to claim. But while acknowledging and bewailing our sins and transgressions, we may yet hope that if we come before God with humble and penitent hearts, casting ourselves upon his mercy and earnestly striving to do his will, we shall not be rejected from the throne of grace, or be denied the welcome with which every faithful soul shall be received into the mansions of our Heavenly Father."

CHAPTER IX.

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RESIGNATION OF PASTORAL OFFICE, AND MEMORIAL.

THE R. MADGE was accustomed to say that a minister should, if possible, take care not to hold his office until either mental or physical decline compelled him to relinquish it, and that he should rest awhile from his work, ere the night came, when he would be able no longer to labour. He had, indeed, fixed on what he thought the suitable period for his retirement, much sooner than his people could be brought to agree with him in relation to it. "His eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated." His services were not less esteemed, and by many they were even more valued than they had ever been. They wished still to look upon him as their pastor and spiritual guide, and persuaded him to retain his position when he proposed and intended to withdraw from it. But

when he had reached his seventy-third year he felt that his purpose must not be again delayed, and sent his resignation to the treasurer of Essex Street Chapel, accompanied, however, with a promise that, as he understood it was desired, he would still assist in conducting the religious services, after he had ceased to be the minister of the congregation.

A deputation waited upon him in the hope of inducing him to modify his decision, but he could not be moved from it. A meeting of the subscribers was therefore held in the Chapel on Sunday, the 28th of November, 1858, in pursuance of a notice convening the same by the trustees, and GEORGE LONG, Esq., was in the chair. WILLIAM SHARPE, Esq., and JOHN SMALE, Esq., now Chief Justice in the colony of Hong Kong, reported the result of their interview with Mr. MADGE, and his determination to relinquish his pastoral office in a few months afterwards. It was then resolved unanimously,—

"That the subscribers present desire to express, for themselves individually and for the congregation at large, their sincere and deep regret that their honoured pastor and friend, the Rev. THOMAS MADGE, who for more than thirty years has ministered to them in sacred things, feels himself impelled, by the pressure of ad-

vancing years, to resign his charge. They wish also to assure him of their grateful and affectionate appreciation of his services in the holy cause of Christian truth and charity, and of their earnest desire to retain to the end of their lives a recollection of his eloquent and impressive teachings from the pulpit of this chapel, in sermons unrivalled in lucid arrangement, and close and conclusive reasoning, no less than for beauty and variety of illustration, for the deep devotion of their spirit, and for their purifying and ennobling influence on the best affections of the heart. They devoutly trust that it may please the Almighty to grant him, in the evening of his days, health and strength to enjoy in the society of his relatives and friends that repose he has so well earned.

"That the subscribers also desire to convey to Mr. MADGE their warmest thanks for his kind and most disinterested offer to assist for a time in the services of the chapel, after the appointment of his successor shall have taken place, and they rejoice that they may indulge the hope of sometimes listening to his well-known voice from his old pulpit after the period of his regular ministration has passed."

These resolutions were sent to Mr. MADGE. But a strong feeling was manifested that some more substantial token of regard should be presented to him by the members of his congregation, which was subsequently carried into effect in the most gratifying manner. He ceased to be the stated minister of Essex Street Chapel in the Spring of 1859. On

Sunday morning, March 27th, he appeared for the last time in this capacity, and addressed a large congregation. Seldom had he preached with greater vigour or been heard with more satisfaction. His text was taken from Luke iv., 18, 19, and the subject of his discourse was "Christianity a message of good tidings." In this sermon he carefully reviewed the doctrines which, with their varied application to the nature and condition of mankind, as mortal and immortal beings, had formed the burden of his ministry for the period of thirty-four years. In the language of the great Apostle of the Gentiles, the aged pastor could truly affirm that he had preached not himself but Christ the Lord.

"My aim [said he] has ever been to set before you what I believed to be simply the truth as it is in Jesus. To no speculations or conclusions of mere human reason have I appealed as the ground of my instructions, but solely to what our Lord himself said and taught and did. I have built on no other foundation than that which was laid by him. If, as occasion required, I have pleaded earnestly for the doctrine of the Divine Unity, it was because, in doing so, I followed in the steps of Christ, who placed it at the very head and front of the commandments. If I have dwelt on the boundless and everlasting goodness of God, it was because my faith in this blessed truth was strengthened and confirmed by the gracious words which fell from

his lips. If I have spoken of the heavenly Father's readiness to receive back to his love and favour his sorrowing, penitent child,—if I have represented to you the necessity of obedience to his divine law, of reformation and newness of life, as a condition of salvation, as a means of inheriting the promised rewards, it was because I found it so written in the records of the Saviour's life and ministry. Nothing is of greater importance to man than right apprehensions of the nature of religion, of what God would have him to be here, and the destiny that awaits him hereafter. But it is not in the philosophy of the Porch or the Academy that such views are to be found. It is not modern Eclecticism, or modern Mysticism, that will speak strongly to the hearts of men, and bring them home to God. It is the simple truth of Christ, spoken on his authority, and proclaimed as a direct message from Heaven. His life, his labours, and his sufferings, his death and his resurrection, his whole being on earth and in heaven,—this it is which is the source of its vitality and the secret of its power.

* * * * * *

"And now, brethren, I have to observe that my connection with you as your appointed minister is this day brought to a close. But if it be your will and that of my excellent and respected successor, and it should please God to grant me a competent measure of health and strength, my ministrations here will not altogether cease. Associated as, in my mind, this house of prayer is with many and dear recollections of the past, it will be my pleasure at all times to unite with you in the worship of our common Father, and not unfrequently, I would hope, to lead your devotions and to speak to you of the things pertaining to the

kingdom of God. With what imperfections I have preached the Gospel to you no one can be more truly sensible than myself. I have greatly needed your candour and indulgence, and I thankfully acknowledge that I have largely experienced them. Many and great have been the changes which I have witnessed during my ministry among you; but if, in any of those changes, I should have been the means of strengthening faith, of consoling grief, of administering peace and comfort to the mourning and dejected spirit, or if at any time I have awakened in a human soul one virtuous resolution, one good and holy desire, the recollection of it will be to me a source of real satisfaction as long as memory holds her seat. I cannot conclude this address without offering you my sincere and grateful acknowledgments for the many kindnesses which I have received from you, and for the regard with which you have favoured me. I trust also that the friendships which, while in your service, I have had the good fortune to acquire, neither the lapse of time, nor the vicissitude of events, will be allowed to diminish or impair. And when the bonds which unite us together in this life are sundered by death, may we meet again before the mercy-seat of our heavenly Father, there to renew the friendships and fellowships from which we have derived so much of our happiness here! Finally, brethren, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace, and may the God of love and peace be ever with you!"

In this manner did Mr. MADGE close his ministry at Essex Street Chapel,—a ministry which for acceptance and popularity, it was at the time remarked, had never probably

been surpassed in Unitarian congregational history.* Happy is the Christian teacher who, in humble confidence, can thus appeal to those whom he has been "over in the Lord," and, on resigning his trust, and finishing his work, can remind them that it has been his one aim to preach the gospel, and that he has "not shunned to declare unto them the whole counsel of God!"

On the 9th of June, 1860, Mr. MADGE received the following most kind communication, which afforded additional evidence of the veneration in which he was held by those to whom he had so long and so faithfully ministered :—

"DEAR MR. MADGE,—

"When the trustees of Essex Street Chapel called the subscribers together to receive the announcement that you had resigned the office of minister of the chapel, an office which for thirty-four years you had held with so much benefit and satisfaction to them,

* Mrs. BARBAULD, in writing to the Rev. Dr. ESTLIN, of Bristol, from Stoke Newington in 1817, observes: "Mr. MADGE is preaching and lecturing here with great applause; the young people particularly are delighted with him. . . . . Yes, my friend, the young will run after the young, and at our age we must content ourselves generally with the good we have done." In Mr. MADGE's case, however, his popularity never waned, and his last sermon as pastor of Essex Street Chapel was admired by his younger hearers, and felt by the aged, to be not less interesting than those which in earlier life he had delivered.

the impression produced was one of heartfelt and general regret, for none of your hearers had perceived any diminution of those powers which had so eminently qualified you for the discharge of your high duties. The resolutions which were then passed by the subscribers assured you of their grateful appreciation of your services, and their best wishes for your future happiness, and conveyed to you their warmest thanks for your kind and disinterested offer to assist in conducting the religious services of the chapel, after the appointment of your successor.

"At the time of passing these resolutions a general desire was expressed by the members of your congregation to add some further and more lasting evidence of their feelings towards you. In furtherance of this desire, the pleasing duty has been confided to us of assisting in carrying it into execution. The task we have had to perform has been an easy and most agreeable one. We had but to indicate the Bank into which contributions might be paid, and a hearty and general response was the immediate result.

"We have now, in fulfilment of our duty, to request, on behalf of the members of your congregation, that you will do them the favour to acccept the accompanying Memorial of their grateful and affectionate remembrance of you as their pastor and friend.—We remain, dear Mr. MADGE, with the sincerest respect, your obliged and faithful friends,

"Elhanan Bicknell,	"Geo. Long,
"W. Strickland Cookson,	"John Smale,
"Robert Dunn,	"John Taylor,
"William Lawrence,	"John Watson,
"Wm. Sharpe,	"Philip Worsley.

"To the Rev. THOMAS MADGE."

The memorial consisted of a thousand guineas, and a beautiful and richly embossed Salver, with this inscription:—

TO
THE REV. THOMAS MADGE,
WHO FAITHFULLY FOR FOUR AND THIRTY YEARS
BORE ELOQUENT TESTIMONY TO THE TRUTHS
OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION
AS MINISTER OF ESSEX STREET CHAPEL,
IN WORTHY SUCCESSION OF THREE HONOURED LABOURERS
IN THE CHURCH OF CHRIST,
LINDSEY, DISNEY, AND BELSHAM,
THIS MEMORIAL,
(WITH A THOUSAND GUINEAS),
WAS PRESENTED ON HIS RETIREMENT
BY THE MEMBERS OF HIS CONGREGATION,
IN GRATEFUL ACKNOWLEDGMENT
OF HIS PUBLIC SERVICES,
AND AS AN EXPRESSION OF THEIR AFFECTION FOR HIM
AS THEIR PERSONAL FRIEND.
MAY, 1860.

Several of those who signed this most gratifying and affectionate memorial preceded him to the spiritual world. No one had attended divine service at Essex Street Chapel more constantly than ELHANAN BICKNELL, Esq., and at his delightful residence in the neighbourhood of London Mr. MADGE was always an honoured guest. There he became acquainted with DAVID ROBERTS, whose only daughter Mr. BICKNELL's eldest son married, and often met other celebrated modern

artists, with some of whose finest productions all who knew the house at Herne Hill, will remember that it was adorned. GEORGE LONG, Esq., was for many years Police Magistrate at Marlborough Street. He too was one of those thoughtful, studious, refined laymen, so frequently seen in the old English Presbyterian Churches, to whom allusion has been made in a previous chapter of this volume, who brought to the examination of subjects of religious faith a reverent spirit, and free and active research;—who were Christians, enlightened believers in the truth of the gospel, from personal inquiry and a close examination of the arguments by which its divine origin is proved—and Unitarians, because they had searched the Bible diligently, and learned from it that the Father alone is God, and the only proper object of worship. Mr. LONG was a charming companion, a man of liberal culture, the author of several works, and of one, "An Inquiry Concerning Religion," of which, and especially the part relating to the internal and historical evidences of Christanity, Mr. MADGE thought very highly. JOHN TAYLOR, Esq., was one of the TAYLOR family of Norwich, a Fellow of the Royal Society, a man of accurate and profound

judgment, of considerable scientific knowledge, one of the earliest members of the British Association, and its treasurer until within a short time of his death. Mr. TAYLOR had all the reverence of his family for moral and divine truths, and was a firm and consistent supporter of Unitarian Christianity. He wrote privately to Mr. MADGE some time before he retired, and when he knew that it was his intention, after a certain period, to relinquish the stated performance of the services at Essex Street Chapel :—

MY DEAR SIR,—

"This will be felt as a severe loss by all those who have had the great advantage of receiving from you that instruction and comfort which your discourses have been so eminently qualified to impart.

"For myself, it is gratifying to look back on the long period during which you have known, and been associated with, different members of my family, and I reflect gratefully on the friendship thus created and preserved. While, in common with all your hearers, I must feel sorrow at the resolution you have taken, yet feeling, as I sensibly do, the effects of age upon the mental powers, and particularly on the weakening of the memory, I am compelled to think that your resolution is a prudent one, and that we ought to be grateful to you for the time you have allowed us for making the necessary arrangements for repairing our loss. I hope it may be possible that some plan may be suggested by which you might occasionally, and

when you felt it agreeable and convenient to you to do so, to take some part in conducting the religious services of the chapel.—I remain, my dear Sir, your sincere friend,

"JOHN TAYLOR.

"Rev. T. MADGE."

The Memorial was presented to Mr. MADGE on Saturday evening, June 4, 1860, and made all the more acceptable by the deputation appointed to wait on him from the congregation, consisting, as it did, of three gentlemen who had given him the strongest proofs of their regard—JOHN WATSON, Esq., who was for many years his true friend, a man of a beautiful spirit, and of liberality and generosity in every good work such as are rarely equalled; WILLIAM SHARPE, Esq., who resided near him, with whom he was in habits of intimacy, and whose departure a few weeks only before his own, almost in the midst of his days, Mr. MADGE sincerely mourned; and W. S. COOKSON, Esq., to whose kind and thoughtful attention for many years he was greatly indebted. It would have been strange, indeed, if he had not been touched by such a tribute of esteem and love from those with whom he had been so intimately connected. Valuable intrinsically, however, as the gift was, I am quite sure that its highest worth to him was

the evidence which it afforded of the sentiments indulged by the people of his late charge towards him, and the manner in which they had testified their love and reverence for their old minister. The following letter was addressed by him to the members of the congregation attending during his ministry at Essex Street Chapel :—

DEAR FRIENDS,—

"I beg you to accept my earnest thanks for the signal mark of esteem and regard which I have just received from you. The letter addressed to me on the occasion would of itself have been sufficiently gratifying. But accompanied as it was with so munificent a gift, and the beautiful Salver, graven with the record of it, and which, I trust, will descend to my children as a cherished memorial of the honour done to their father, I have no words to express, as I would desire to do, the feelings which it has awakened in my heart. Earnestly do I wish that my public ministrations had been more worthy of such a testimonial and of the generous liberality to which alone it must be ascribed. I can only say that of this and the many instances of considerate and friendly attention shewn to me for a series of years past, I shall retain to the last moment of conscious existence a lively and grateful remembrance. Nor can I look back upon the period of my ministry amongst you without the pleasing reflection, that throughout the whole of it, our harmony was never disturbed by a single word of discord or contention. And when at length the time seemed to have come for the termination of a connection which,

happily for myself, had so long subsisted between us, it was sincerely and from the heart, that, in taking leave of you as your appointed minister, I could bid to one and all of you an affectionate farewell. Conscious, however, as I am of the imperfections and deficiencies with which my humble labours in the service of our common Master were attended, and notwithstanding the satisfaction derived from your kind, but too favourable appreciation of them, it would still add to that satisfaction could I be assured that they had served in any degree to satisfy the minds of the inquiring, and to strengthen the faith of the wavering, to give relief to the anxious and troubled spirit, and consolation to that of the sorrowing and bereaved. With the hope that, to some extent, this may have been the case, and with earnest wishes and prayers for the real and enduring welfare of yourselves, your families, and all who are dear to you,

I remain, your faithful and grateful friend,

"THOMAS MADGE.

"20 HIGHBURY TERRACE, *June* 11, 1860."

CHAPTER X.

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WORK AFTER HIS REGULAR MINISTRY.

MR. MADGE'S ministrations did not cease, as he had promised they should not terminate, with the resignation of his office. In conformity with the desire of his successor, the Rev. J. PANTON HAM, and the earnest wish of the congregation, he preached every alternate Sunday morning, in his old pulpit. His services were also frequently requested in other places. In many respects, he was more zealous than he had been during the term of his pastoral office in encouraging changes which he hoped would promote the prosperity of Essex Street Chapel. He recommended alterations and improvements which he thought might improve its appearance, suggested the introduction of an organ, and the establishment of schools, and took a very warm interest in carrying forward these objects, and in all

that concerned the welfare of the society over which he had presided.

Towards the end of the year 1860 Mr. MADGE, from the pulpit of Essex Street Chapel, paid a just tribute to the memory of a friend whom he greatly valued. The Rev. PHILIP LE BRETON, who was educated for the ministry of the Church of England, and rector of St. Saviour's in the island of Jersey, having been led, after serious inquiry, to conclude that the leading doctrines of the Book of Common Prayer were not scriptural, at once resigned his living, and declared his adoption of the Unitarian faith. He had a wife and children dependent upon him, and was not a man of fortune. But although on two occasions he was offered the Deanery of Jersey, a preferment which had been held by his father, and was one of considerable emolument as well as dignity, his determination could not be shaken, and with a resolution to abide by the dictates of conscience, he would do nothing that he held to be incompatible with Christian integrity. He came to London, and engaged in tuition, but could never be induced to resume the ministry, or, I believe, again to appear in the pulpit, though he had been an

impressive preacher. I had not the advantage of knowing him well, but I have heard Mr. MADGE often refer to the fine qualities of mind and heart for which he was remarkable. He was a member of the Essex Street Chapel for more than forty years, and there his pastor expressed the high estimation in which he held his character. In allusion to his separation from the Establishment, and to the pain with which it must have been attended, Mr. MADGE said:—

"It is not in our nature to part with endeared associations and to separate ourselves from the paths in which we have been accustomed to walk, without wishing that, if possible, the trial might be spared us. But his noble devotion to the convictions at which he had honestly arrived overcame all difficulties, prevailed and triumphed over every wordly consideration. Costly as were the sacrifices which he made at the call of conscience, I never heard from him even the slightest allusion to them. Far from claiming any merit on account of resigning his station in the Church, with all the bright prospects of future advancement that were held out to him, he seemed to have looked upon it as if it had only been the discharge of a simple, common duty, so humble and modest was he in performing an act which conferred upon him the highest honour. He might, no doubt, have remained in the Church, could he, like many learned divines of the present day, have satisfied himself with putting new meanings into old words, and giving to the articles

and creeds which he had subscribed an interpretation directly opposed to their obvious signification, and that intended by their framers; but to subterfuges like these he could not descend, and therefore followed the plain, straightforward course which his conscience dictated. Such firmness of principle, combined with so much humility, such strength of will, united with so much tenderness of heart, as were displayed by him, are qualities rarely to be found in the same person."

This was preaching that might well have been inspired by the memory of THEOPHILUS LINDSEY, in whose pulpit the words were uttered. Mr. MADGE was not a man who was given to pronounce harsh judgments on the motives or the conduct of others. He knew that there are distinguished and excellent clergymen who remain in the Church of England whilst they differ from her Articles and Confessions, and openly endeavour to correct and improve them, in the hope of making her faith and worship more accordant with reason and scripture. But he deemed the course they pursue a mistaken one, and felt that it is neither conducive to the advancement of truth, nor to the maintenance of a lofty and uncompromising morality in the community. He feared the effect upon thoughtful young men who have been brought up to revere the law of Christian sincerity,—and have not yet

learned to listen to the voice of temporal expediency,—of the use of formularies in the solemn engagements of the house of prayer by those who minister at the altar of the God of truth, which are known not to be believed, and yet are declared to be essential to salvation. He felt that there must be great danger to the best interests of religion when, in relation to Christian teachers especially, the outward observance is at variance with the inward conviction, and that far more would be done for the advancement of theological reform by following the example of those who, like Mr. LE BRETON, come out of the Established Church, and thus protest against her errors, than by remaining nominally in her communion, and reciting her creeds, when they no longer express the highest and best sentiments of those who repeat them. I have heard of a Bishop who was once asked the way to Heaven by one who said that he did not want to be troubled about Ritualistic disputes, but simply to be told how he might best secure the Divine favour, and reach the goal which all must desire to attain. And the prelate answered, "the way you wish to know is very simple—Turn to the right, and keep straight on!" Would that all

Bishops were thus wise and Christian! Well has it been insisted that honesty can bring after it nothing but good, let appearances be what they may. And this it behoves the minister of the gospel emphatically to bear in mind. Straight onward should his path ever be, thinking only of how he may approve himself to God, and discharge his duty to his fellow-men, leaving the consequences of what he does and says with Him whose assurance still remains, "Fear not for I am with thee"; —and, remembering for admonition and consolation the words which can never pass away, "The true worshippers worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship him."*

* That a conflict with traditional beliefs is going forward in all churches is very evident, and the issue of the struggle is only postponed, not rendered doubtful, by the timid who hesitate to avow their convictions, and by the temporising who suggest first one compromise and then another, with the vain hope of peace. The Vice-Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, W. G. CLARK, Esq., M.A., who is well known for his fearlessness and ability, in writing on the present dangers of the Church of England, observes:—"The end is nearer than might at first sight be supposed. The imposing preponderance of 'orthodox' opinion is more apparent than real. Clergymen for the most part consider themselves bound by their ordination vows to be silent as to their doubts, or if they express them at all, do so, for fear of giving offence, in covert words and ambiguous phraseology. The rules of good manners impose upon laymen the same reticence in general society. Editors, out of a prudent regard for the popularity and consequent circulation of their periodicals,

When Mr. MADGE retired from the stated work of the ministry, he resolved also for the future to decline all occasional public duties which would demand from him special preparation. It was with considerable hesitation and reluctance consequently that he agreed to preach at Birmingham on the dedication of the Church of the Messiah. He was urged very strongly by his friend the Rev. SAMUEL BACHE to perform this service, and was in-

refrain from any attack on, or insinuation against, the belief of the majority of their readers. The same rule holds good with respect to authors. And over all men hangs the fear of that social ostracism which is implacably pronounced on any one who dares to express dissent or doubt. Such a man is branded at once with the name of 'Infidel;' he has to suffer under the imputation of unworthy motives. * * * * * It requires some moral courage to brave all this, and to retort, as may most righteously be done, the charge of Infidelity upon those who are unfaithful in their allegiance to Conscience and Reason and Truth. Hence springs that universal reserve which so easily degenerates into insincerity, hence that cautious language which so frequently merits the title of equivocation.

"Meanwhile there are numbers of the clergy, and not of the clergy alone, who are suffering perplexity and distress of mind, and suffering all the more keenly, because they know not in whom to confide, or where to look for sympathy. Many stifle their doubts and quiet their consciences by devoting all their time and thoughts to works of active benevolence;—the best and noblest consolation which is within their reach. But even so, their preaching lacks the power which it would have if they were at liberty to speak their sincere and inmost thoughts."

The Church is to such men a house of mental bondage, and they should surely seek the sympathy of free minds, whose principles they have for the most part adopted!

duced by his regard for him, and the earnest desire expressed for his presence and aid, to comply with the request. The church was opened on the 1st of January, 1862, and it was a long journey, at that season of the year, for one of his age to undertake. But he did it cheerfully, and the sermon he delivered was one which was admirably adapted to the occasion. He was pleased with the beautiful edifice, and impressed with the large assembly before him. His thoughts were carried back to the old familiar place which the congregation had quitted, and with which so many hallowed associations were connected. He knew that on its site had once stood the building in which the great and good Dr. PRIESTLEY ministered, and which was destroyed by the violence of an ignorant and bigotted multitude.* Memories of the past, of the sainted dead, and of honoured and faithful men who had successively laboured in the cause of truth and righteousness were recalled to his mind, and under the influence of the emotions of which he was himself conscious, and which he felt must be shared by others, he spoke of the immutable nature of Christian truth from the words, "Jesus

* During the Riots at Birmingham, 1791.

Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever."* After pointing out that not the nature, but the doctrine of Christ, is to be understood in this passage, he went on to shew that it is one of the peculiar excellencies of the gospel, that it meets all the real wants of the human heart, and that it preserves always the same character, and embraces in its regards all times and all people. He could not agree, he said, with those who thought that in religion we must be ever seeking and never coming to a knowledge of the truth. The mind soon grew weary of being tossed to and fro on the sea of conjecture, and required something stable and sure upon which faith can rest, and around which the affections can gather. In human science we looked for new discoveries. The invention of yesterday might be improved by the invention of to-day, and that again be followed by still further improvements on the morrow. But Christianity is ever the same, and has the impress of imperishable value. He admitted the progressive character of the gospel, in the sense that the world would never outgrow it, and that it would hold on with the expansion of intellect, and still be found in advance.

* Hebrews xiii., 8.

But in this view the change is in man, and not in the teachings of Jesus. *We* see more in them as our knowledge extends, and we become more pure and elevated in mind and feeling. But *they* remain as they fell from the lips of Christ, and have the power of accommodating themselves to human wants and progress :—

"I do not mean," said he, "that Christianity, in all its aspects, in all its relations to human life and duty, is so fully and perfectly understood that no further light can be thrown upon it. I do not suppose that the great idea of God is exhausted; or, that our views of his perfections are all so clear and comprehensive as to admit of no enlargement; or, that there are no parts of scripture into the import of which we may not gain a deeper insight. By reflection, by the aid of a more instructed reason, by the light of a purer spirit, we may rise to higher conceptions of God's truth than we have yet attained to. All I would maintain is, that though this may be the case, the truth itself remains the same, yesterday, to-day, and for ever. Christianity, in all its essential features, is to me the expression of the most absolute and perfect religion. The language, however, which we sometimes hear in reference to this subject, would seem to imply an expectation that, after outgrowing the present dispensation, a new dispensation is some day to come down from heaven, better adapted to man's estate in this world, and to his preparation for another. On what grounds such an expectation is entertained, by what signs or promises it is indicated, I am wholly at a loss to surmise. For when we look at

Christianity and become acquainted with its true nature and character, what nobler principles, I ask, what greater or more precious truths can be unfolded to us than those which lie plainly before us in the records of Christ's teaching and life? Is man erring and needs to be instructed, guilty and requires forgiveness, mortal and longs for immortality? What says Christianity to him? There is one God, the Creator of all things and of all beings, infinitely powerful, wise and good, ordering all things in perfect love, and conducting all things to a glorious consummation. Believe in him, trust in him, obey his will, and happiness will attend your steps, and peace will dwell in your hearts. Does man, like the benighted traveller in the wilderness, go sounding on his dim and perilous way till he finds himself in wandering mazes lost? Christianity comes to his aid, opens for him a way through the desert, disperses thence all mist, and shows him things invisible to mortal sight. Is man conscious of having too often departed from the commandments of God? Does he feel and lament the unworthiness of his conduct? Is his soul cast down, and is his spirit disquieted within him? Christianity assures him that he has a Father in heaven who is ever ready to have mercy and forgive. It points to Jesus as the bearer of his peace, as the messenger of his love. It tells the penitent sinner to listen to his voice, to attend to his instructions, and to let his soul be comforted, for that all who come unto God through him, he will in nowise cast out. Is man mortal and does he pant to live again? Does the light of nature but faintly illuminate the dark valley of the shadow of death? Is the eye of reason alone unable to pierce through the gloom which surrounds the precincts of the grave? Again is the voice of Jesus heard

saying, 'I am the resurrection and the life. He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live, and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall not die for ever.' Here, then, is the rock on which we may securely rest. When, in faith, I see Jesus rising triumphant from the tomb, and treading again, in company with some of his beloved disciples, the very ground which he had trodden before, then I am assured that death is swallowed up in victory and that this mortal shall put on immortality. So felt that wise and good man, the late Dr. ARNOLD, who said, in reference to the loss of one of his family, 'Nothing afforded us such comfort, when shrinking from the outward accompaniments of death, as the thought that all these had been around our Lord himself, round him who died and rose again, and is now alive for evermore.'"

There were no subjects of greater interest to Mr. MADGE than those pertaining to the origin of Christianity and the history of its divinely commissioned founder. He was well acquainted with the testimony of those who wrote in the early times of the gospel, and a diligent student of all that modern research and speculation have propounded and suggested respecting Jesus of Nazareth and the religion which is identified with him. The records of the New Testament he held to be of unspeakable moment, since from them alone can any true and reliable conception of what Christ was and did be obtained. Persuaded, from re-

peated and careful inquiry, that these records were penned by their reputed authors, and that they were competent and faithful witnesses, Mr. MADGE accepted the Evangelical accounts of the great teacher, and believed that they were reports of his words and deeds at once honest and credible. In the year 1865 he prepared a lecture on the relation of miracles to Christianity, which he delivered at Essex Street Chapel, and repeated in the Hackney Unitarian Church, in the months of May and June. In this lecture he expressed his latest thoughts and convictions on the genuineness of the gospels, and on the mighty and marvellous deeds which are in them ascribed to Christ. Whatever may be the conclusion at which we have arrived on the question to which the argument applies, there will be no doubt as to the clearness and force with which it is set forth by Mr. MADGE in the following words :—

"But these accounts, we are told, relating to facts of which we have had no experience, are of a nature to deprive them of all claims to credit. Miracles, it is alleged, are either impossible or incredible. This is the sort of language which is now very much in fashion. A strong disinclination to accept the Christian miracles is widely prevalent. To reject them is thought to be the mark of an independent and

philosophic mind. The notion becomes contagious. It spreads from one to another till it seizes upon those who little understand the real bearings of the question. In the remarks which I am about to make on this part of the subject, let me first state that with the Pantheist or Atheist I have now no concern. With such an one, reasoning is out of the question. Of course, if he will not admit of the existence of a personal God, of an almighty and intelligent Creator of the world, he cannot admit of the possibility of miracles. For without the existence of a supernatural Agent, there can be no supernatural agency. But speaking to those who do believe in a Supreme Will, in a conscious Governor and Ruler of the universe, I ask, What is a miracle? What do you mean by it? Do you mean by it, what it is sometimes defined to be, a violation of the laws of nature? What is law but the established order in which the Author of all things proceeds in the exercise of his power? Now there is no violation of this law by what is properly termed a miracle. JOHN STUART MILL,—following in this respect Dr. THOMAS BROWN in his essay on Cause and Effect,—tells us that miracle is no contradiction of this law. It is simply a new effect introduced by a new cause. That cause, we say, is the will of God. There is no interference between the natural connection of the *same* antecedent and the *same* consequent. For instance,—take it by way of illustration,—when God said, Let there be light, and there was light, what law of nature could be said to be violated? So when he said, Let the blind see, and the blind saw, what law was violated thereby? There is no question, observe, of the universality of the law of causation. The question is purely this, whether, in addition to the

causes which we see in constant operation, another cause, say the will of God, has been in operation too. General physical reasoning does not really affect the question. All that such reasoning can establish is this, that if the same causes, which we see usually operating, continue to operate, certain effects will invariably follow. But this cannot tell us what effects will be produced under the influence of a new cause. If, then, the Christian miracles are rejected, it is not because of their essential incredibility, but because the evidence alleged in their favour is deemed to be insufficient for the purpose. Mr. MILL admits that miracles may be certified by our senses, or by testimony. Now we contend that we have this testimony, the testimony of those who themselves witnessed them, or of those who were well acquainted with them that did. In the narrative of our Lord's teachings and doings, the Evangelists wrote on as naturally as they breathed. They speak of his wonderful works in the plainest and most artless manner, as if it were as certain that he performed them as that he was then living."

He goes on to state that it seems to him impossible to separate the supernatural from the natural in the gospels without destroying the coherency and consistency of the whole history. The real object of the miracles of Christ, he contended, was not to prove the truth of his doctrine but to attest his mission; —for this purpose are they frequently appealed to by our Lord; and if we cut out

all that refers to, and is connected with them in the narratives of the four Evangelists, the excision will leave us but a poor and miserable remnant of the religion in which we now rejoice. With other and very able writers, ancient and modern, Mr. MADGE was content to rest the truth of Christianity on the resurrection of Christ. He dwells with especial earnestness on Paul's belief in this fact, and on the distinct and emphatic manner in which this Apostle holds it up as the foundation on which the Christian Church is based. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, he observes, all assert the return of their master from the dead. John and Peter appeal to this fact likewise, as a matter within their own personal cognizance. And Mr. MADGE insists,—

"That the fact which they proclaimed was, after all, no fact, but a mere dream, is utterly beyond the bounds of human belief. They testify that after his crucifixion, to their surprise and wonderment, Jesus appeared to them alive, that they had seen him again and again, had walked with him, had conversed with him, had eaten with him, and that they could not be deceived in beholding in him their risen and beloved Master. This they solemnly testified, and persevered in their testimony to the end of their lives. Now in opposition to this, what has been offered? Nothing; I say absolutely nothing in the way of fact, but merely that the

Evangelists, in their account of the miracles and resurrection of Christ, differ from one another in matters of smaller moment, though it is admitted that in the main they are substantially agreed. Now this we consider to be characteristic of men writing independently of one another, and shews them to be free from all suspicion of collusion,—free from all suspicion of acting in concert for the purpose of presenting a uniform consistent account. Respecting, however, the differences or discrepancies between them, what signifies it whether *one* or *two* blind men were cured at Jericho; whether the miracle was wrought by Christ when he was *entering* or when he was *leaving* the town; whether our Lord declared to Peter that the cock should not crow *once*, or that it should not crow *twice*, till he had thrice denied his Master; or whether Christ was crucified at the *third* or the *sixth* hour of the day; of what consequence, I ask, are discrepancies like these, when compared with their general agreement in matters of chief importance? All we demand, as PALEY observed, is general agreement under circumstantial variety. There is enough of discrepancy to shew that there could have been no previous concert among them, and at the same time such substantial agreement as to shew that they were independent narrators of the same great transactions. With the different Evangelists, however, there is not, up to the time of Christ's resurrection, any very great difference observable between them, but the difference increases and becomes more marked as we come to the accounts which they have left us of what took place at the resurrection. And this is just what we should have expected. The surprise, the agitation, the excitement, the bewilderment, into which their minds were thrown when Jesus presented himself to

them alive after being laid in the grave, would naturally render them incapable of giving an exact statement of all the little incidents that occurred in connection with his death and resurrection, and especially after the lapse of some twenty or thirty years; but the impression left upon their minds of the great facts would remain deep and enduring. The Gospels are unanimous in declaring that the grave in which Jesus was buried was found empty, that the Lord had risen indeed, that he presented himself alive to the Apostles, and that it was the same Jesus whom they had known and loved in days just gone by. The alleged discrepancies are just such as might be expected from faithful, but not infallible, witnesses. With the slight variance of statement which is to be found in the Evangelists, there is a general agreement among them in all the leading facts connected with his crucifixion and resurrection."*

Mr. MADGE sent a copy of this lecture to his old and valued friend, the Rev. JOHN KENRICK, and from him received the following reply, which I have obtained permission to insert here :—

"YORK, *September* 25, 1865.

"MY DEAR MADGE,—

"Accept my thanks for the present of a copy of your lecture. It is very clear and well-reasoned, which is more than can be said of much that has been written lately on this subject. It is difficult to imagine in what other way than by the possession of super-

* The Relation of Miracles to Christianity, by THOMAS MADGE, pp. 9, 10—22, 23.

natural power, convincing evidence can be given of a supernatural source of knowledge. And if a religion has no supernatural source, I know not in what intelligible sense it can be called a *revealed* religion, or distinguished from the religion of nature. At the same time I would not refuse the name of Christian to any one who wishes to rank as such, merely on the ground of his denying the reality of miracles. If he assumes the name, only to indicate that he prefers the Christian religion to any other, I would not set up a definition which should exclude him. And therefore I regret Mr. BACHE'S proposed change in the preamble of the Association, and have endeavoured to dissuade him from urging it.—I remain, yours very truly,

"JOHN KENRICK.

"Rev. T. MADGE."

The retirement of Mr. MADGE from the regular engagements of the ministry produced no perceptible difference in his mode of life. His leisure was employed in the pursuits which he had always loved. He had never been a man of rigidly methodical habits in regard to the distribution of his hours, but no one could be more careful in the due and timely preparation for his various professional duties. He was always ready for the services required of him, and cultivated the calmness and quietness of spirit which were essential to his comfort in discharging

them. After family worship, which he invariably conducted with great simplicity, but most impressively, he spent the early part of the morning in the perusal of the daily papers. He then went to his library, where he had always some work on hand in which he was interested. His fondness for his books was very great, and he was particular in the order of their arrangement, and liked to see them handsomely bound, and plainly lettered, that he might easily find a volume when he wanted it for reference. He much enjoyed going round his study with a friend when he knew that he was in sympathy with him, and turning to those volumes which he valued most, and reading passages from them with which he was most familiar, and whose perusal had afforded him delight. A few persons are still left who remember these communings with him, and the pleasure which they gave, and who regret that it can never again be realized! His remarkable freedom from the usual infirmities of age enabled him to see and mingle freely with friends and relatives. His hearing, which was never impaired, permitted him to join in social converse whilst his strength remained, and though no one ever cared less for grand and costly entertainments, he derived

much gratification from the intercourse with others, which it was his privilege to enjoy.*

The year 1865 brought with it fresh anxieties on account of the health of his son TRAVERS. For a long time it had been evident that he was growing feebler, and that the end was drawing near. TRAVERS MADGE had much of his father's enthusiastic nature and ardent spirit, though the contrast between their lives and their work is so striking. He had passed his Christmas, and began the new year which was to be his last, very happily, with Mr. and Mrs. MADGE and his sister in London. But, on his return to Norwich, his weakness rapidly increased, and early in March his father and Mrs. MADGE went to see him once more, and never left him again until the wearied and worn-out body was at rest, and the

* He would sometimes, even at a very late period of his life, be induced to attend a public dinner, and did not find the excitement too much for him. I well remember going with him in the year 1865 to Fishmongers' Hall, during the Prime Wardenship of WALTER VENNING, Esq., and meeting CHARLES BALDWIN, Esq., nearly ninety years old, who had been all his life connected with the press. The two veterans conferred together on their common memories of the past. There was an American youth sitting near us, and Mr. BALDWIN said to him, "It may interest you to know that you are in the company of one who, in his boyhood, was accustomed often to see Dr. JOHNSON at his father's house and who distinctly recollects his person, and the wonder and reverence with which he was regarded."

pure spirit went home to God. In the Rev. BROOKE HERFORD'S touching and beautiful memoir of TRAVERS MADGE it is said that his father's visit was a great pleasure to him. "If he was too weak to talk to him, he liked to have him sitting by his sofa; and before he went to bed at night his father read some portion of scripture and prayed with him; and often in the day TRAVERS said how delightful this was to him."* He was now a member of the Church of England, but they conversed happily together on the highest themes in the last hours of his life upon earth. Just before the parting moment came, the aged father knelt and implored the support and comfort for his son which God alone could give. He walked with him down the valley of the shadow of death, and saw him departing in joy and peace to the land immortal!

This event, though it had been foreseen, and was attended with all the solace that Christian resignation and hope could impart, was a trial and a sorrow which were deeply felt by Mr. MADGE. He could not but be thankful that TRAVERS was released from

* Memoir of TRAVERS MADGE, p. 189.

suffering, and for ever with the Lord. But the pain of parting with him was great, though soothed by the prospect of a not distant re-union in the world above, where, as he believed, the pure affections of earth would be strengthened and glorified.

The best remedy for the sadness and depression arising from bereavement is useful occupation. Mr. MADGE had been often asked to prepare a manual of family prayers, and he now turned his attention to this work, and brought out, in the course of the year 1866, a book which has proved an important addition to the aids provided amongst us for domestic worship. He excelled in such exercises. The prayers are short but fervent, and suited to the wants of the different members of a household. No mean judge pronounced the volume the very best of the kind she had ever seen. With great skill he has varied the praises and the supplications so as to suit persons of all ages and conditions, and to avoid repetition of language and monotony of sentiment.

Having accomplished this object his hand was at once put to another to which he applied himself with much diligence. He had been requested by many of the most influen-

tial members of his congregation to print for their benefit some of the discourses preached by him at Essex Street Chapel, and in the year 1867 he published twenty sermons on subjects relating to Christian Faith and Life, which will bear comparison with some of the highest and best standards of modern pulpit literature. It was justly remarked of them on their publication, that "they *are* sermons, not essays; speech from a living man to living men, not closet disquisitions; and they possess, therefore, a measure of that prophetic power which no mere intellectual accuracy of statement or subtleness of argument can exercise."* The selection shews that he wished this book to be regarded as a faithful record of his public teaching—that by which he would be judged by those who came after him. Its contents are varied, and practical in the best sense of the word, because they are adapted to incite men to duty by leading them to think of its importance and solemnity, and by making them feel its responsibility, and inducing them to act in accordance with its claims and dictates. The charm which accompanied their delivery, those who never heard the preacher cannot

* "Theological Review," p. 456.

possibly find in the quiet perusal of the printed page. But the attentive reader of these sermons will be struck with their beauty and their power, and will not wonder that their author should have attained the eminence which he reached. The discourse on "Good Arising out of Evil" was preached at Bristol, in Lewin's Mead Chapel, not long before his decease, and it so impressed one who heard it,* that he earnestly requested its publication, and offered to bear the expense of printing. The sermons, as might be expected, are not all of the same order of excellence. Those on "Human Life," on "Love to Christ," and on "The Providential Wisdom of God in the State of Infancy and Childhood," seem to me to be the most striking. An able and influential layman of our own body, who has seen much of public life, once remarked to me, in speaking of this volume, that it was his frequent Sunday companion, and that he never opened it without being interested in, and he believed improved by, its contents,

* The late JOHN EDYE MANNING, Esq., who died a little before Mr. MADGE, at the age of 86. He was the third son of the venerable Rev. JAMES MANNING, of Exeter, who was one of the ministers of George's Meeting in Mr. MADGE's youth, and filled the office for fifty years.

so free are they from obscurity, so earnest in their tone, and so readily apprehended.

It might well have been supposed that this volume would be "the last fruit from an old tree." But the pen was not yet to be quite laid aside, nor its use forgotten. Mr. MADGE's studies naturally caused him to take a deep interest in the discussion which arose in the latter years of his life, with reference to the Fourth Gospel, and he was led to examine very carefully the arguments for and against its authencity. When the learned and candid book of his friend, the Rev. J. J. TAYLER appeared, and he found that it was an attempt to disprove the Apostolic authorship of this portion of the New Testament, and to shew that it was not written until towards the middle of the second century—for his own satisfaction and, as he hoped, that of many others, Mr. MADGE determined to draw up a statement of reasons for believing in the genuineness of the Gospel according to St. John. And those who saw it will ever retain a lively recollection of the energy with which he gave himself to the task which he had undertaken. He made no pretension to original research, but had carefully investigated the subject, and nothing could be more firm and immovable

than the persuasion in which he rested. The united and unvarying belief of the church as attested by the history of Christianity in the two first centuries, he contended, was, that John wrote the Gospel which bears his name; and he agreed with some of the most free and acute of modern critics that this Gospel, in regard to external evidence, stands "not in a worse, but in a better position than either the first three Gospels, or the writings of Paul."*

This is not the place for criticism on what Mr. MADGE has done. I have only to indicate the object he contemplated, and the light in which his book was regarded. He wrote it after he had entered upon his eightieth year, but it bears no signs of the decay of age, and in converse with him there were no symptoms then of any loss of mental vigour. There was hardly anything he ever did, perhaps, to which he devoted himself with greater earnestness. It is recorded of the Venerable BEDE that he was engaged in translating the Gospel of St. John when he perceived that death was approaching,—and that on being reminded there was still "one chapter wanting," he

* DE WETTE.—Introduction to the Canonical Books of the New Testament,—p. 200.

desired a lad who was near him to take a pen and write fast at his dictation. When he was told that the last sentence was finished, he replied, "It is well"! and soon departed giving thanks to God. Often as I saw Mr. MADGE busily occupied, and scarcely allowing himself any rest from the labour he had undertaken, I thought of this scene, and felt that he too, as he knew not "how long he might hold out," was concerned that he might not be taken away before he could say of his work in the language of BEDE, "It is ended"! It really seemed as though he felt himself impelled to vindicate the rights of a dear friend ere he departed To him John's narrative was the most precious of the four Gospels, because he not only held it to be a true account of the life and words of Christ, but the production of the disciple who was loved best by his Master.

Mr. MADGE had the pleasure of being assured, by many whose judgment he valued, of the usefulness of his little treatise. Amongst the letters he received was one from a divine and a scholar, and a clergyman of the Church of England, the spirit of which it is impossible not to admire. A copy of the book had been

presented to him by the author, and he writes :—

"*December 4th*, 1868.

"My Dear Sir,—

"I have for some time intended to write and tell you how satisfied I have been with your small work on 'The Genuineness of John's Gospel.' It is a useful size, tempting to persons who would be alarmed at a thick book on the subject. Your proofs are very satisfactory, and such as cannot be refuted, unless the bases upon which all history stands be pronounced to be worthless. There is no stronger proof of the authenticity, than the general acceptation of the Fourth Gospel by the various opposing sects, which existed at the beginning of the second century.

"There is a remarkable statement in Eusebius (Hist. Eccl. III. 24) which I do not think you have mentioned, viz., 'The Gospel of St. John is spread abroad in all the Churches under heaven, and ought to be considered of the highest importance (*πρῶτον ἀνομολογείσθω*), being universally received.'

"I am very much pleased with the manner in which you treat the difficulty with respect to the eating of the Passover, and the way in which you reconcile the account given us by John, with those of the Synoptical Evangelists. There is however to me some slight difficulty with respect to the Supper mentioned in Chapter xiii. 1. There is a want of definiteness about it. The *δείπνου γενομένου*, might apply to an ordinary repast. Were a *τοῦ* present it would give much greater force, and point it out more clearly as The Supper, *i.e.* the Passover. Still your remarks con-

siderably weaken this difficulty; especially those on the παρασκεύη, which are quite sound and will bear the test of criticism. The title would have pleased me better had authenticity stood in the place of genuineness. These two words are frequently used as synonimous, but I fancy they ought to be kept distinct. You must not think me presumptuous in thus giving you my opinions. I can assure you I am truly gratified to find that you can employ your leisure in such useful occupation. We want the bases of our trust and hope strengthened in every possible way. Above all, may we labour to shew the unity of all true servants of Christ, and to destroy the petty animosities which trivial differences excite and keep up. We want the spirit of St. John, and the toleration of Paul to be diffused among the followers of Christ, so that we may all unite in the true Catholic Christian Church of love and toleration which Christ founded, but which is not yet understood.

"It would give me great pleasure to meet you again, and I trust I may have the opportunity of doing so. In the meantime I trust you will consider this note as a spiritual visit, and believe me to be, yours sincerely in Christ.

"_____."

An accomplished American Unitarian minister, in acknowledging the receipt of the same work, writes:—"I have carefully read your Essay on the Fourth Gospel, and do not see how it is to be answered. It is delightful to perceive how clear, and vigorous, and fresh

your mind and scholarship are at your advanced age."

To DAVID ROWLAND, Esq., who about a year before Mr. MADGE's decease published a valuable pamphlet, entitled, "The Evidence from Tradition and from the Fathers applied in support of the Apostolic Origin of the Fourth Gospel," he sent a copy of his own work and received the following letter, which will find a suitable place here :—

"SYDENHAM HILL, 14*th April*, 1869.

"MY DEAR SIR,—

"I had the pleasure of your letter yesterday, accompanied by your little work 'Reasons for believing in the Genuineness of John's Gospel,' which, however, I am happy to assure you I purchased some time ago, and read and considered very carefully. It was not because I thought you had not handled the subject very clearly and very convincingly that I ventured to take it up, but because I thought I could present it in another light. Your little treatise is that of a divine and a scholar,—mine is that of a lawyer,—and I think, and I hope they will stand side by side and do battle together. I assure you I should not have written, but that I thought it my duty to make public the views that had occurred to me, and which some friends thought important. Mr. TAYLER has used all his power to depreciate the Gospel, and every one who has anything to say in support of it should come forward. I have

always considered it essentially the most Unitarian of the Four Gospels.

"The diversity between the Fourth Gospel and the Synoptists alleged to result in a difference of dates, for the Lord's Supper and the Crucifixion appeared to me to rest on no support whatever.* That allegation is, however, not peculiar to Mr. TAYLER. RENAN asserts it. Lately a book was written to assert and support it. There is some reference to it in SMITH'S Dictionary of the Bible. By some it is designed as a mode of accounting for the absence of the institution of the Lord's Supper in the Fourth Gospel, and not as an attack on the Gospel itself. I did all I could against this branch of the question, because I considered that it rested upon a complete fallacy, and I had a friend who maintained it against me. * * *

* The part of his little work to which Mr. MADGE gave most care, and attached most value, was that perhaps which relates to the date, according to John, of the Last Supper between Christ and his Apostles, and the day of his crucifixion, which, it has been contended, are not only divergent from, but virtually inconsistent with, those of the other Gospels. Mr. TAYLER endeavoured to shew that the supper mentioned in the Fourth Gospel xiii. 1, is not the Passover Supper, but an ordinary supper. Mr. MADGE, on the contrary, maintained that the statement in John, and that in the other Gospels on this head are perfectly reconcilable with each other. The argument is conducted, it must be allowed, with singular clearness and ability, even if it cannot be said that the difficulty is altogether removed. But a difficulty in the chronology of Passion Week ought not surely to disturb our confidence in the authorship of this Gospel, which has never been seriously disputed until the present time, but from the beginning, as far as we know, and certainly from the end of the second century, placed by all the great writers and critics among the undoubted Apostolic writings.

"I am happy to find that you enjoy a vigorous old age, and with kind remembrances,—

I am, my dear Sir, yours very truly,

"Rev. THOMAS MADGE." "DAVID ROWLAND.

In our Unitarian churches there are no rules of faith prescribed, and as perfect freedom of thought is encouraged, there are to be found in them considerable differences of opinion. Mr. MADGE was a Unitarian of what is called the "old school." But he had nothing narrow or exclusive about him. Always was he ready to welcome new light. He treated those who were less conservative than himself in matters of theology with respect, and never indulged the least bitterness of spirit towards an opponent. Many clergymen of the Church of England he reckoned amongst his friends. He was on terms of intimacy with the Rev. HENRY ALLON, the eminent Independent minister, often went to hear him at Islington, and much enjoyed his services. But in the exercise of charity he ever remembered what was due to his own conceptions of truth, and did not shrink from any duty which fidelity to his religious opinions required.

At the annual meeting of the British

and Foreign Unitarian Association, held at Hackney, in May, 1866, the Rev. SAMUEL BACHE moved a resolution,* which, if carried, would have made belief in the divine mission of Christ a condition of membership. This proposal, of which there had been previous notice, occasioned much discussion before the anniversary, and gave rise to a long and rather stormy debate when it arrived, but was at length rejected by a large majority of the members, from a strong objection to creeds and confessions of faith, and because the rules of the Association distinctly state that it was formed for "the promotion of the principles of Unitarian Christianity and its worship." Mr. MADGE was not dissatisfied with the constitution of the Society, which he knew to be definite and Christian. But he thought that there would be more complete unity of action if all connected with it were agreed on the point which Mr. BACHE had enforced, and came to the conclusion that he ought to second the motion. Fearing the effect of excitement on his general health, efforts were made to keep him from taking part in the proceedings, but without avail. He felt that no other opportunity so favourable would

* See p. 264.

probably be afforded him of giving utterance to what he desired to say, and when he stood up and addressed the chairman there was the utmost stillness, and he was listened to with profound attention, both by those who agreed with and those who were opposed to him :—

"I rise [he said] to second the motion of my friend, Mr. BACHE, and in doing so I am anxious to state that in my estimation the Resurrection is the great and all-important fact in the history of Christ; and I would, therefore, say with the Apostle Paul, that 'If Christ be not risen, then is your preaching vain, and your faith also is vain.' Or, as he has elsewhere expressed himself, this is the word of faith which we preach, that, 'If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.' Now, whatever meaning we may attach to this word saved, it is perfectly clear, I think, that the Apostle Paul did lay the greatest stress upon faith in the Resurrection of Christ, and even STRAUSS himself is obliged to admit that faith in the Resurrection was the foundation stone, without which the Church of Christ could not have been built. Dr. HEDGE also, the Professor of Ecclesiastical History in Harvard University, says in his work on 'Reason in Religion' :—'Criticism has done its uttermost with the New Testament. What is now left standing is likely to stand; and what is it that is thus secured to us? Enough to substantiate to fair and rational criticism the crowning fact of the Resurrection.' Now, I say, take away this crowning fact, and you destroy in man the great life of humanity; take away this fact, and you

take away that in which not only some of the best men that ever lived, but that in which the hearts of millions mainly rest their belief in a future state. To suppose then that I should be willing to act in concert with those who would strip Christianity of its finishing glory, and of that which rendered it, of all its blessings, the dearest and most precious, is to suppose that which is contrary to my whole nature. Jesus and the Resurrection,—that, as it was St. Paul's, so is it my Christianity, and I acknowledge no other. If this be admitted, I am satisfied. I ask for nothing more. We have, in that case, the testimony of God himself to the divine mission and authority of Christ. But if this be not admitted,—if this great miracle of the Gospel be denied or rejected,—then, sir, I must say that I have not the slighest sympathy with such persons, and must therefore seek the communion and fellowship of those, whether Unitarian or not, with whom on this essential point I am in entire agreement. A church calling itself Christian without a risen Christ, is a church built upon the sand, and must fall to the ground. These at least are my views, and by them, narrow as they may be called,—as everything else will be so called which is in any degree opposed to modern scepticism,—by them I am resolved to abide."

There is a growing tendency, I imagine, even amongst liberal orthodox theologians, to rest the external argument for the truth of Christianity on the Resurrection of Christ, and the right to the Christian name mainly on the admission of this fact. NEANDER, with whom I had the privilege of spending an

afternoon, more than twenty years ago, in Berlin, when speaking of this subject, said that to him every man was a Christian, whatever views he might hold respecting the doctrines on which the Church is divided, who believed in Christ's return from the dead, and that he could not see on what ground any one denying this doctrine could claim to be a believer in Christianity. The Apostle Paul would certainly seem to have taken the same position in his Epistle to the Corinthians.* He contends that if Christ had not risen the bright and blessed hope of immortality cherished by his followers would have perished. And yet he gives no direction for the exclusion from Christian fellowship of the impugners of the resurrection of Jesus, and it is evident that there was a latitude in the Church at Corinth which allowed them still to continue within it.†

When Mr. MADGE spoke at the anniversary of the Unitarian Association, he apprehended that the Unitarian body was about to depart from a sober and reverential faith in historical Christianity. It was this

* 1 Cor. xv., 14.

† See Dean STANLEY on the Epistles of Paul to the Corinthians, p. 296.

fear that led him to say that, in such a case, he must seek the fellowship of those, whether Unitarians or not, with whom he was in actual agreement on a point which he deemed essential. But he was mistaken in supposing that there was any desire to render the Association less distinctively Christian. And no necessity arose to oblige him to withdraw his venerable presence, or his sympathy from it. To the end, he went on giving his counsel and example, and his revered name, to the Church in whose communion he had been from his youth. It would indeed have broken his heart, and sadly grieved many others, if he had been compelled from any cause to change his *status* at the close of so long, honoured, and faithful a ministry. Nor had he any fear, ultimately, that it would be necessary to take any such course. In the latter part of his life he usually attended divine worship at the Free Christian Church, Kentish Town, and found in the services of the Rev. P. W. CLAYDEN all that he sought and desired. He had great pleasure in meeting on the Sabbath the members of Mr. CLAYDEN'S flock, and they were always gratified to see his aged and dignified form amongst them. It is due to him, however, to observe that the views of the

relation of miracles to Christianity, which he had so earnestly advocated, remained unaltered. I think he looked too exclusively to the evidence which the supernatural element in the life of Christ affords of the divinity of his mission, and did not sufficiently consider how possible it is to be drawn to him, quite apart from miracle, by his teachings and character,—and that vast numbers love his religion, cherish his spirit, and walk in his steps, who want no more to convince them that he has the words of eternal life, and to induce them to become his disciples. But what Mr. MADGE really contended for was, that a divine sanction had been given to the Gospel. To him Jesus of Nazareth was not to be contemplated as a great religious genius and reformer, who sought to make the world better by merely declaring spiritual truths and moral precepts, which approved themselves to his own mind, or which he had framed or discovered,—but as one divinely authorised to proclaim the will of God concerning human duty, forgiveness, and immortality. Christianity, as Mr. MADGE accepted it, is not a Theism, based on what may be gathered of the Creator, either from His works or from the intuitions of the human soul. And so to represent it, he held, with

one of the ablest living preachers in the land of CHANNING, is not to go forward to a more advanced, but to relapse to a lower position.* He regarded the religion of Christ as a bright and glorious revelation of the true God—the Father,—and as such to be distinguished from natural religion. But he did not doubt that the Almighty had given witness of Himself in His works, and in the hearts of men; and it may not be without interest to know, that the very last effort he made with his pen was to write a brief article on the argument from "Design," which appeared in the *Theological Review* a few months only before he died.

In the summer of 1867, Mr. MADGE accompanied me from London, where I had been his guest, on his usual annual visit to Clifton. At the Paddington Station as he was getting out of the carriage the horse moved forward, and he fell and was in great danger of being crushed by the wheels. No injury, happily, followed, and he was lifted up, and pursued his journey as though he had been exposed to no danger. It was one of his greatest pleasures during many of the last years of his life to go to Clifton. He had

* Rev. J. FREEMAN CLARKE, of Boston, Mass.

many valued friends in the neighbourhood for whom he had a warm regard, and amongst them the Rev. EDWIN CHAPMAN, with whom he had been acquainted in London, and Mrs. CHAPMAN, who was a daughter of his early friend Mr. STURCH.* Bristol, too, was associated with the memory of his daughter AMELIA, and out of London there was hardly any place in which he felt so much at home. No sooner did he stand on the Downs and breathe the fresh pure air, than he would say that it made him feel younger and stronger, and it is pleasant to think of the happy hours he passed in the enjoyment of the beautiful scenery which met his eye, and soothed his spirit, now that his face will be seen upon earth no more! On one of the Sundays during his stay with us on this occasion, he took the whole of the morning service, but we perceived that there was not the usual freedom and vigour in his manner, and that the effort of speaking in so large a Chapel as that of Lewin's Mead, was more than he ought to make. He remained about a fortnight, and we wished to keep him longer with us. But he had promised the Rev. Dr. SADLER his help at

* See p. 146.

Hampstead, and he was scrupulous in keeping his engagements. His last sermon was delivered in the Rosslyn Hill Chapel, July 14, 1867, and from the text, Matt. xxv., 34.;* a most beautiful and appropriate passage with which to close his long and faithful ministry. Dr. SADLER in a letter to me observes:—

"I have a very clear recollection of July the 14th, 1867, when our venerated friend, Mr. MADGE, preached in my pulpit his last sermon. Though he had, I believe, already reached his eightieth year, he seemed to have lost hardly any of his accustomed fire. After the service a friend applied to him the very words which had suggested themselves to my own mind—'the old man eloquent.' I remember, however, that when I gave Mr. MADGE my arm to return to my house, he seemed feeble; and I noticed that when he sat down he seemed rather exhausted. Something—I cannot recollect what—suggested to me the idea that he might never preach again, and I thought that, if this should be the case, his ministry would have a good ending. He was to leave London in a day or two for Eastbourne; and it was during his stay there that the lameness came on, which I suppose was the first sign that 'the silver cord' was loosened and must soon give way." * *

The attack which came upon him whilst he was with his family at Eastbourne at first distressed him very much, because it deprived

* "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world"!

him for a time of the power of walking. From it he never recovered, and the weakness always rendered motion difficult; but he soon regained his cheerfulness, and was able, with a little assistance, to take exercise on the Terrace at Highbury, and was often accompanied by his old friend PETER MARTINEAU, Esq., who lived within a few doors of his residence, was about his own age, and had been a member of his congregation. But even now he did not entirely give up the idea of preaching. The spirit was still willing, and he wished very much to assist Mr. CLAYDEN in the pulpit at Kentish Town. With this view he prepared a sermon which, however, was not delivered. The discourse is now before me. The text is taken from Acts iii., 15, and the subject is the Resurrection of Christ. It is written with his usual neatness, and scarcely at all interlined. It was his final effort as a Christian teacher. It will never be heard; but it was meant to be an utterance from the borders of eternity on which he was standing, of his unwavering belief in the truth which Peter and the Apostles preached in Jerusalem, where Christ was crucified, that God had raised the Prince of life from the dead, whereof they were witnesses. Having dwelt on the value

of this testimony, and on the blessedness of that faith in a life to come, which is so strong as to give energy to our existence and animation to our piety,—to soothe our sorrows, and to illuminate our joys, he speaks with glowing confidence of the great Christian hope. And it may be interesting to many to read the very last words he wrote on this solemn subject :—

"If the course of Providence does not deceive us,—if the voice of nature does not give an uncertain sound, if any trust is to be placed in the faith of the inner man, or any reliance upon the promises of God,—there is a glory to which the followers of Christ shall be admitted when they quit this state of flesh, and are released from the coils of mortality. . . . . Heaven and earth must pass away, but the word of God shall not pass away. His promises shall be fulfilled, and His assurances shall be fully realized. Yes! heaven and earth must pass away! This grand and beautiful world with all its fair show of earth, and sky, and sea, must vanish and be gone! But fear not, O man! Whilst our bodies are buried in peace, our spirits shall rest with God. We look into the grave, and see nothing there but darkness and dust, but faith comes and shows us the city that God hath prepared for those who love him, and where we shall eat of the tree of life and live for ever!"

CHAPTER XI.

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THE RESULTS OF HIS MINISTRY.

THE results of a minister's labours can only be perfectly known to Him from whom nothing is hid. He alone can discern in what measure the word spoken profits, and whether the seed of the spiritual sower has fallen by the wayside, or on the rock, or amongst thorns, or on good ground. It is better not to be too much concerned about the effect of what is said from the pulpit. Let the preacher strive and pray to be faithful and true there, and then calmly trust in Him who, whether Paul shall plant, or Apollos water, will not fail, in his own time and way, to grant the increase. It is a blessing unspeakable, no doubt, to be assured that instruction, help, and comfort have been imparted by,—that virtuous resolutions and penitent feelings have been formed and acted upon, and that holy desires have issued in conversion and reformation, in con-

sequence of,—the services of the house of prayer. And this happiness Mr. MADGE was permitted to enjoy. There were instances, not a few, in which he learned that faith was made more pure and firm and clear; that the love of God and man was expanded and strengthened; that the pursuit of truth, which enlightens and sanctifies, was encouraged; that the repentance which leads to reformation had been caused, by his preaching. One correspondent, in writing to him, alludes to the many occasions when he had spoken words of comfort to her, with her heart laden with sorrow. Another sends him grateful thanks for all that he has done for some among the dearest of her friends now no more. The venerable Lady SMITH, of Lowestoft, in her ninety-seventh year, but with her faculties bright as in younger life, observes, in a letter written since his death:—"I have always considered myself greatly indebted to him for the happy and, as I firmly believe, Apostolic representations of the Christian religion which he held and explained to others with so much clearness and reverence." There can be no impropriety in my now stating what he related to me many years ago, that one Sunday evening a gentleman called on

him, and, after conversing a few minutes, said, that he had resolved on self-destruction that very night, and risen with a full determination to carry out his design. In the morning, however, he had been led into Essex Street Chapel, he could not say *why*—except that the doors were open as he passed up the street, and seemed to appeal to him to enter. The sermon he heard there had so impressed his mind and touched his heart—awakening thoughts of God and duty which had too long slumbered, inspiring hope, and convincing him that there might be even again for *him* pardon, succour and peace—that he had been turned from his sad purpose, and could have no repose until he sought the minister by whose agency, under God, he was mercifully rescued from suicide, and from whom he trusted and believed that he had derived lasting spiritual benefit.

The following note has come into my hands since Mr. MADGE'S decease. He never saw it, as the writer recovered, but it was penned by one who had been much interested in his services, when it was imagined that death was near, and contained a sum of money, which he was requested to employ in the purchase of a book for his library :—

"*November* 13*th*, 1837.

"DEAR SIR,—

"When you receive the small enclosed remembrance I shall have passed through that valley to which you have frequently directed my thoughts. I would ask you to lay it out in some work which may not be on your shelves, and to keep it as a trifling token of the gratitude I feel towards you, for having so often and so beautifully endeavoured to raise my affections to Heaven and Heavenly things. Your discourses ought to have elevated my mind, your prayers should have lifted up my soul in devout aspirations to its Maker. I humbly hope that my spirit, by these means, and the other advantages I have enjoyed, may, through Christ, be admitted to communion with God. May you have administered as much spiritual comfort to the rest of your flock as you have done to me, and may we all be reunited—one fold under one shepherd, Jesus Christ, the Captain of our Salvation.

"Your sincere well wisher,

"———."

Mr. MADGE's delicacy, gentleness, and great refinement, rendered him peculiarly attractive in his preaching to thoughtful and devout women. To many such his aid was most valuable in cases of religious doubt and difficulty, and as an adviser in trouble and affliction. A lady in writing to Mrs. MADGE since his death observes, "There will not be another preacher like him! How beautiful he was in prayer! My mother used to say

she never heard any prayers like those of Mr. MADGE. He will be much missed by a large circle. His manner was always so gentle and so kind. Never shall I forget his funeral sermon for my father!"

Always modest and unassuming, he seldom alluded to his own success in his work. But there are many still living who bear a willing and grateful testimony to the value of his ministry, and numbers amongst the departed, to whom he has now been united, who were brought by him to God, and guided to heaven. It is gratifying to me to know that my own conception of what Mr. MADGE was as a minister, is confirmed by one of the most respected and excellent members of his congregation at Essex Street Chapel. In compliance with my desire that he would give me the impression he had received of the services of his late venerable friend and pastor, he writes:—

"I can only reply very feebly and inadequately to your request. Mr. MADGE'S pulpit discourses were always interesting; but during the earlier part of his career I think they were addressed more to the intellect than to the conscience of his hearers. His mind was lucid rather than profound. The views which he formed he grasped with earnest vigour; and he presented them with force and perspicuity. When occasionally he

approached the deeper wants of our nature, and dwelt on the need which human frailty has of divine mercy, help, and guidance, there was a touching earnestness and simplicity which went to the hearer's heart. It was owing, probably, in some measure to the native delicacy and refinement of his mind, as well as to the peculiar character of his congregation, which for a long time comprised a large portion of the most cultivated and fastidious of the Unitarian body, that he ordinarily avoided the more searching topics of the pulpit. Admirable taste, simplicity, and clearness characterised his sermons, which were further set off by the affectionate persuasiveness of his manner, and his excellent enunciation.

"But of late years there was a perceptible change in the tone and character of his discourses. We felt that the experience and discipline of life had matured and mellowed his mind, and imbued it with the ripe flavour of Christian hope, trust, and submission. Age had not diminished his powers, but had given an added grace, earnestness, and dignity to his exhortations, and imparted a nearer and clearer perception of those eternal realities which are the highest concerns of man.

"On those occasions, often so trying, both to the preacher and the hearers, when he was called upon to advert to cases of mourning and bereavement in the family circle, he manifested peculiar tact and delicacy, soothing and consoling the afflicted without wounding the sensitive and shrinking. I can testify how strong a sense of this remains among surviving friends.

"His prayers were characterised by a tone of simple and touching piety, and evinced the affectionate devoutness which lay at the foundation of his nature.

"Mr. MADGE'S position at Essex Street afforded but

little scope for what are termed 'the pastoral duties' of a minister. The subject, however, recalls to my mind an incident which, I think, I ought to mention as an instance of his genuine liberality and kindness. I had early imbibed views opposed to the practice of infant baptism, and when I became a father, felt it necessary to act in accordance with my convictions. My venerated friend, the late Dr. CARPENTER, under whose influence my opinion had been formed, kindly offered to conduct a dedicatory service instead of the usual Christening, an offer which I thankfully accepted; but I thought it due to Mr. MADGE to write and apprize him of what I had done, and of my reasons. He replied in the kindest and most considerate terms, expressing his approval of the course I was taking, and requesting to be allowed to be one of those present at the intended service. He came accordingly, and I felt deeply obliged by such a mark of sympathy and friendship."

The allusion in this letter to the touching and tender manner in which Mr. MADGE comforted the sorrowing, may well be noticed in connection with the results of his ministry. I have myself heard references frequently made to the value of his services in affording consolation to the troubled and afflicted. More than forty-four years ago the following words fell from his lips at Norwich, on occasion of the death of a young minister,* who was

* Rev. JOHN HUGH WORTHINGTON, one of the ministers Cross Street Chapel, Manchester.

much regarded. They are still remembered, and have been sent to me as strikingly illustrative of the tenderness with which Mr. MADGE was accustomed to speak from the pulpit to mourners, and to refer to visitations of bereavement :—

"And here perhaps I shall be excused for reminding you for a moment of one whose pure spirit has lately quitted its mortal tenement, to take its place, as I believe and trust, among the souls of the just that wait before the throne of God. You are no doubt aware of the loss which society, and our own denomination of Christians more especially, has lately sustained in the death of a young and most respected minister, of whom personally I knew not much, but of whom and of whose high character only one opinion can be entertained by all who had the pleasure of his acquaintance. I refer to this event not only because it meets my own individual sympathies, but because I believe it will be in unison with yours—for most if not all of you have been witness to his services in this place;—have, I should hope, been benefitted by them, and cannot but remember the simplicity, zeal, and earnestness with which they were discharged. And surely when we endeavour to bring before our minds the image of what he was and of what he now is, when we think that a little while ago he who stood where I now stand speaking to you the words of consolation, and gladness, and peace is now silent in the grave; that his sun is gone down while the dew of his youth was yet upon him, and that the beautiful promise of his morning life with its spring-blossoms and its early fruit is, as it seems to us, thus

prematurely cut off:—when we endeavour to form to ourselves a distinct image of his transition from life to death, from activity and enjoyment to insensibility and decay, we cannot but be impressed with the vanity of human life, and must feel that man is indeed but of few days, and is as the flower of the field which cometh up in the morning and is cut down in the evening. It is impossible to look at such a picture of humanity as this without feeling our hearts moved to penitence and prayer, and earnestly wishing that we too might descend to the grave, if not full of years, yet like our departed and lamented friend, full of hŏnour and of virtue. For such a creature as man, religion is, indeed, the one thing needful—needful to guard him when living and to support him when dying—to fill his heart with faith, and hope, and love, to breathe into him the peace which passeth knowledge, and to enable him to lift up his soul to his Creator and Father, and say, not with the lips only but with the heart, "Thy will, O God, be done." Who that thinks for a moment of what human life in its best estate really is? Who that looks upon the grave of a young man whose first days had been pure and happy, and whose advancing hours were steadily and faithfully devoted to the service of God and of his fellow-creatures? Who can look upon such a grave without mingling his tears with those which have already fallen upon it, and without taking into his heart the lessons and admonitions which may minister to the piety and virtue of his future days?

"Dear and virtuous spirit! Thus early thou hast been taken from us to rest in the bosom of thy Father and thy God, till the dawning of that bright and blessed day, when, all earthly cares being laid asleep, and all earthly sorrows removed, time shall give place to

eternity, and all, who like thee have walked humbly and faithfully before their God, shall join in the glorious community of Heaven, be members of one vast family under the guardianship of their merciful Father, loving and loved, blessing and blessed for ever and ever.

"The righteous should be had in everlasting remembrance. It is our duty to remember those who have approved themselves unto God. By contemplating often the virtues of those who have died in the Lord, there will be 'gathered upon the silent shores of memory' those pure images and holy thoughts which would tend to keep our hearts pure and clean. Thus the memory of the just is blessed—blessed, indeed, it will be if it lead us to think more wisely and justly of human life, more seriously and frequently of death and eternity, and more anxiously and habitually to follow the example of those who, through faith and patience, inherit the promises."

A friend who was present at one of Mr. MADGE'S pastoral visits has a vivid impression of the value and beauty of his services on this occasion, which was a very solemn one. It was in a sick-room, and he was called to administer the Lord's Supper to a member of his flock who was near death, and to the loved and the dear who were around her bed. The address has been preserved and valued which he delivered before the Communion, and it may be appropriately inserted here, and will form a suitable close to the chapter:—

"The circumstances under which the rite of the Lord's Supper was instituted are detailed by the Evangelists and the Apostle Paul with great simplicity and beauty. Our Saviour knew that the close of his life on earth was at hand, that the design of his mission was about to be accomplished, that he was soon to pass through his last and greatest trial; that already one of his disciples had consented to betray him, and that the rest would desert him in the hour of his distress.

"With these thoughts labouring in his mind, he resolved yet to have one meeting of love and familiar intercourse with those whom his Father had given him, and whom he loved to the end; and making use of the opportunity presented by the Feast of the Passover, the Evangelist tells us that when the even was come he sat down with the twelve.

"Such was the interesting period at which this communion took place. The Son of Man was about to be betrayed into the hands of sinners.

"His prophetic eye saw the scenes that were preparing, and he, who loved mankind so well, must have been affected with the deepest sorrow that they were to become the instruments of such unprovoked cruelty.

"Thus, like a father on his death-bed surrounded by his children, he sat among his disciples, informing them in terms too plain to be misunderstood that he was not long to be with them, and opening to their sorrowing hearts sources of heavenly consolation.

"Tender, beautiful, and affectionate is his language, 'Let not your hearts be troubled, put your trust in God, put your trust also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you, and when I have

prepared a place for you, I will come again and receive you to myself, that where I am there ye may be also.'

"Amidst the clouds which hang around this dim spot on which we dwell, faint and imperfect is our knowledge of what is reserved for us, and when we expatiate on these subjects, we lisp like children who attempt to speak of the employments of riper years. Enough however is revealed, if not to satisfy our curiosity, yet to hush our fears, to quiet our anxieties, and to remove our doubts.

"Adieu to all speculative reasoning upon the probability of a life to come.

"The faith of the Christian in such a life rests upon the basis of a fact.

"He whom we are now about to commemorate, and who died upon the cross, rose on the third day from the sleep of death and ascended up into heaven.

"In the firm belief of this great and auspicious event, let us learn to temper hope with patience, to feel that our afflictions are dispensed to us in mercy, and to be devoutly thankful for what we are, and for what we are to be, when this mortal shall put on immortality.

"In the eye of christian faith the virtuous and the good never die. Though on earth their bodies return to the dust, in heaven their spirits are with God.

"And in whose keeping can we better leave them?

"Let us dwell, then, on the blessed prospects which have been opened to us by Christ, and when the light of present comforts is withdrawn, let us think of that day when God shall be to us an everlasting light, and his favour an eternal glory."

CHAPTER XII.

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PATIENT WAITING IN CLOSING DAYS. FROM 1868 TO 1870.

IT was Mr. MADGE'S rare privilege to be actively engaged in the duties of the Christian ministry for nearly sixty years, and during that long period, I believe, he was not laid aside by illness, even for a single Sunday, from the services he so much loved. Singularly favoured was he in the enjoyment of health, and he did not trifle with, or misuse the blessing, by drawing too largely upon his mental or physical powers. It may be thought, perhaps, by some, that in the fulness of his vigour he might have done more in his profession than he accomplished. But it must be remembered that he had always to address a cultivated and thoughtful audience, and that he was rarely out of his own pulpit. He had no interval of rest from his labours, beyond that of the absence of a few weeks in the autumn of every year, and

never sought the refreshment and novelty of foreign travel.* Whatever he did in his sacred vocation he did well. He gave to his people the fruit of his studies and his prayers on their behalf, and they never grew weary of hearing him. He did not exhaust his energy prematurely by over exertion; but then he was enabled to continue at his post at an age when most preachers are compelled to seek retirement, even if their lives are spared, and thus did more in the issue than if he had been worn out in earlier life by excessive work. And now, having shewn his willingness to do what he could in active effort, whilst opportunity was afforded him, he had only to watch and wait in patience and resignation, whatever the will of heaven might appoint for him. Nor did the goodness and mercy which had followed him all the days of his life, forsake him in the season of decline that preceded dissolution. For a little while he was depressed under the restraint and partial dependence which his lameness imposed, but the sadness soon wore off, and all who approached him were struck

* After he retired from the regular work of the ministry, Mr. MADGE went to Paris with his family, and much admired the splendour of the city, but he loved the quiet and beauty of the country, in England, and was content with the variety and enjoyment which it afforded.

with his serene and cheerful tone, and with the calmness and submission which he manifested. The sense of God's goodness was his daily consolation, and he largely experienced the comfort of that trust in the divine mercy which he had so often and so eloquently exhorted others to exercise. "Let us not grieve," he remarked in one of his discourses,* "at being sometimes called the dwellers in a vale of tears, if through that vale there flows the true river of life, and these tears are necessary to cherish and foster the plant which is to be transferred to the garden of God, and to bear immortal fruit." And he acted in the spirit of his own exhortation. If some of the enjoyments of time were taken away, he knew that it was to enrich the prospects of eternity. But he had much tranquil satisfaction and even happiness, amidst the declension of power of which he could not but be conscious, and thankfully acknowledged that provision is graciously made for the latter days of our earthly existence as well as for the former, and that to the end of their journey God is the helper and guide of his aged people. There was no dejection about him. He had delight still in the

* "On Christian Faith and Life," p. 162.

occupation which reading gave him, in the conversation of those who did not forget him in his retirement, and whose faces he loved to see. He had joy, too, in rest, in the memories of the past, and in the hopes which the prospect of the future afforded.

In the year 1868, the Rev. Dr. BELLOWS, of New York, came to London. His visit was truly a refreshment to many of the Unitarian churches in the United Kingdom. But by no one was he welcomed more gladly than by Mr. MADGE, to whom he had been introduced by the Rev. Dr. DEWEY on a former voyage to England. Of the preaching of Dr. BELLOWS he thought very highly, and he made a considerable effort to attend the *Soirée* of the Unitarian Association at the Crystal Palace on purpose to meet him. On that occasion he was asked to say grace, and the large assembly looked reverently and affectionately towards him as he rose to discharge the duty, and still caused his voice to be heard by all. Dr. BELLOWS was also much pleased to see Mr. MADGE, and they often communed together on the condition and prospects of the Unitarian body here and in America. The following letter will serve to show how he was regarded by Dr. BELLOWS. It was not intended, of course, for publication,

but I shall be pardoned, I am sure, for inserting it in this memoir. It was sent from Liverpool the evening before Dr. BELLOWS sailed for New York, and he thus writes :—

"MY DEAR MR. MADGE,—

"I cannot leave England to-morrow without taking a last look at your venerable form, although I do it only through the eyes of faith. Your kindness and sympathy have done so much to make my visit to England pleasant and profitable, that I shall always put your image in the central place as I look back upon the prospect. How fortunate for me that twenty years should have spared my old friend to repeat the kindness which, on my first visit to London, he extended to a youthful minister of a common faith. I shall think of you, my dear old friend and father, with the most affectionate interest when I reach home, and delight to make your placid old age, and living and loving faith, better known to our common brethren on the other side of the water. That the God of the aged may bless you, as you lean upon your staff and wait his time, is my earnest prayer."

The year 1869 was rendered sorrowful to Mr. MADGE, as well as to their own families, and a wide circle of friends, by the removal of two of our leading ministers, the Rev. J. J. TAYLER, B.A., Principal of Manchester New College, who died after a short illness on the 28th of May; and the Rev. R. B. ASPLAND, M.A., pastor of the Unitarian Church, Hack-

ney, who died suddenly, June 21st. They were much younger than himself—Mr. TAYLER was seventy-two, and Mr. ASPLAND sixty-five years of age. Mr. MADGE was greatly attached to both, and had the highest respect for their talents and virtues. He did not agree with Mr. TAYLER on some matters of criticism, but he admired his scholarship, his candid nature, his expanded mind, and his wide moral sympathies. With Mr. ASPLAND he was more entirely in harmony in doctrinal conclusions and denominational aims, and gratefully recognised his indefatigable and judicious exertions on behalf of the Unitarian cause. It seemed strange to him that lives so important should be taken while he was left. But he knew that the time for each soul's departure must be that which is best for him who goes, and for those who stay; and he looked forward to a speedy meeting with his friends again, where death never comes. He attended the funerals of both, though he was exceedingly feeble at the time. And as he listened to the service for the dead, he knew well that its solemn words must soon be heard at his own burial. But there was neither gloom nor sadness in the thought. He heard the voice from heaven which says, "Blessed

are the dead who die in the Lord: even so saith the Spirit; for they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them." In a letter which he wrote to an old friend, and member of Essex Street Chapel, who had been greatly attached to his ministry, and who was one of the last with whom he kept up a correspondence, he refers to the death of these excellent men in a manner which shews how highly they were esteemed by him, and how sincerely he mourned their removal:—

"20, HIGHBURY TERRACE, *August 2nd*, 1869.

"MY DEAR SIR,—

"As I had heard nothing from you for some time past, it was with much pleasure that I received your letter from Hastings last week, and, though you do not give me the most satisfactory account of the state of your health, I trust that, on the whole, you are not worse, and am glad that you are able to take such pleasant sea exercise. This must be very pleasant to you as well as healthful and invigorating.

"I am much obliged to you for your kind inquiries after us. With respect to myself, my lameness continues as it was, but my general health remains tolerably good, and I may say the same of my wife and daughter.

"I suppose you are aware of the losses which we have lately sustained by the death of some of our valued friends. Mr. J. J. TAYLER, the Principal of Manchester New College, has left a large circle of friends, who are grieved for the departure of so excellent and learned a man; besides this he was greatly beloved for the many

amiable qualities which adorned his character. To this is to be added another loss which is generally and deeply lamented, I mean that of Mr. ASPLAND, who died suddenly of a heart complaint. This is severely felt by us all. No man was more active and earnest in the cause of what he believed to be Christian truth, and no man could be a kinder and more genial friend than he was. Such at least he was to me, and his departure from among us I feel greatly.

"How the blank that is left is to be filled up I cannot imagine. But that it will be exceedingly difficult is admitted by all.

"With kindest regards and best wishes for yourself, I remain, faithfully yours,

"THOMAS MADGE.

"J. H. NELSON, Esq."

A few months later I had to inform him of the departure of a dear and mutual friend, Mrs. CHAMPION, of Clifton, with whom he had long been on terms of intimacy, and to whose hospitable abode he was in the habit of coming, as it was my residence also, every year. She was one of the excellent of the earth,—a woman of natural piety and self-forgetting goodness, and of a beautiful simplicity of character, and most kind and friendly bearing. She was very near Mr. MADGE in point of age, and had a sincere regard for him. He no sooner heard of her peaceful removal than

He sent me the following letter, to which he omitted, in the emotion under which he wrote, to append his name :—

"20, HIGHBURY TERRACE,
"*November 24th*, 1869.

"MY DEAR SIR,—

"So the dear old lady is gone—gone to her rest without pain or suffering.

"It was not without a degree of emotion that we received your announcement of her earthly departure; for I can never forget the cordial kindness with which she was accustomed to welcome me to her house, and the anxiety which she shewed, and the care which she took, to render me as comfortable and happy as she could.

"I now think of all this with thankfulness and pleasure, but I am reminded at the same time how one friend after another has passed away, and how soon the end must come when the same remark will be made of myself. Indeed, it seems strange that I should continue here so long when those who are not so old as myself, and with lives far more valuable and useful to the world, are taken away.

"Dear soul! she is gone, but there was that belonging to her which cannot easily be forgotten. Remember me to all our old friends; not forgetting among others your good and to me very kind servant Sarah."

The allusion in this letter to the "kind servant," is very characteristic of Mr. MADGE. The genuine courtesy of his nature was

observable in the respect and consideration with which he always treated those who held this relation, and the reverence with which he was regarded by them. One of our old dramatists, with a reverence at once touching and tender, has designated Him to whom we look for the realization of the highest excellence, as

"The first true gentleman that ever breathed."

And His spirit transferred into the habits and manners of society, would, only in this point of view, do much to make homes happy, and to promote general improvement. This spirit Mr. MADGE had imbibed, and it imparted a charm to the intercourse which was held with him in health, and even made his sick room pleasant to all who ministered to his wants, and to everyone who entered it!

When the year 1870 commenced its course, all around him felt it would be the last that he would see. He was drawing nigh, it was plain, to the end of his pilgrimage.

"They also serve, who only stand and wait."

For a few months longer this waiting was continued, in his case, and then the earthly life which had been so protracted and so useful reached its termination. It was a life that had been singularly enriched, and sustained by

divine benedictions, and human sympathies. Mr. MADGE was blessed in his home, blessed in his work, blessed in his friendships, and blessed even when worn with the length of his journey, and his strength failed, in his entire freedom from disease and suffering. All who had the pleasure of being much with him then, must have been struck with his peacefulness, and will have delightful recollections of his ripened experience, the softness and sweetness of his manners, the brightness of his faculties, his kind affections, and the growth in him of those qualities which indicate a fitness for, and a nearness to, the heavenly world. In one of his sermons he once said :—

"Such is the constitution of our minds, that in thinking of the wise and good who have been taken from us, we can scarcely think of anything that is not itself good. The frailties which may have been attached to them on earth fall away as they put off the garment of mortality. It may be said, indeed, that they never really formed any part of themselves. They had gathered round them in the course of time, as gathers the ivy round the oak on which it grows; but as in that case, so in this, they were never essentially blended together; and now that we can contemplate them out of the body, apart from those adjuncts and appendages with which they were, for a while, connected, and with which, perhaps, we had here too closely identified them; now

that we can survey them through a purer and brighter medium than that which formerly surrounded them, we see them as having been, substantially and intrinsically, even on earth, what we shall find them to be when we meet them in heaven. So that in dwelling on the memory of the virtuous dead, we are not only led to form a juster estimate of the real worth of their character, but by recalling to our remembrance their good qualities, disjoined and separated from those little blemishes which may have entwined about them here, we see more perfectly into the true nature of virtue; her graces and her excellencies are more fully and clearly revealed, and present still higher and stronger claims upon our admiration and our love.*

All this is strictly applicable to himself. The defects and imperfections which were visible in earlier life, and which arose chiefly out of his passionate, impulsive temperament, but were never incorporated with his real character, disappeared when age came—with its mellow wisdom, its tranquil and touching recollections, and immortal hopes. The watchful care he needed was cheerfully bestowed, and the unvarying attention which waited upon his steps was affectionately given. He had all that Shakspeare says should accompany old age—

"Honour, love, obedience, troops of friends."

* Sermon on the death of Rev. R. ASPLAND.

Even in the season of decline, there was nothing but painless decay. The mind continued clear, and the heart warm, to the last. The sting of death was taken away, and he spoke of it with as much composure as though he had been retiring to his nightly slumber. With him the whole of life was a preparation for the hour of dissolution, and with the utmost calmness he saw it approach. Grateful to loved ones who were around him, thankful to all who ministered to his wants, rejoicing in converse with those who were with him, mindful of friends who were absent, and sending messages of kindness to them, the real tenderness of his nature was more fully seen, perhaps, in those days when he quietly looked for the great change, than at any former period. He had then the great pleasure of seeing the Rev. JOHN KENRICK several times, during his visit to relations whose residence was very near. And it was a gratification of which Mr. MADGE often spoke, that he was thus able at the last to commune with one whom he had known from youth to age, and maintained a constant friendship. One Sunday afternoon shortly before his death, Mr. JAMES STANSFELD sat by his bedside, and they con-

versed together for some time; and he much enjoyed the interview. He spoke often of the high character and great ability of Mr. STANSFELD, and of the valuable services which he might be expected, as a statesman and a member of the Government, to render his country. On several occasions I was with Mr. MADGE, when he knew that death was approaching, and wondered that it was so long delayed. As with some of the most holy souls there has been a spiritual reserve, a tendency to be silent with reference to the inner life, and the experience of the heart, so it was with him. He was not disposed to talk much about his religious feelings, but never was there a more resigned and submissive mind, or a more sure reliance on the mercy of God through Christ than he exhibited. In my last interview with him, we were alone, and I asked him whether he found the faith which he had preached sufficient for his support in the immediate prospect of death; whether in the retrospect of his ministry, and the thought of soon meeting God, he still regarded the Unitarian view of Christianity as the nearest approach to the mind of Christ, and to the doctrine of the Gospel? He instantly replied, "Yes!"

There was no doubt, no uncertainty, respecting the foundation on which he had built his hopes for eternity. One more broad and sure he felt could not be afforded. The religion by which his life had been governed, and his character formed, sustained and consoled him; and leaning on the promises of the Father, in and by the Son, he feared no evil. He added that he blessed God for having permitted him to be a preacher of Christian truth and righteousness, and expressed his gratitude that, after renewed investigation, he had been able, before his departure, to bring out his little book on the Genuineness of John's Gospel; and that, as his work was done, he was looking for, and even desiring, the change which was near. I then bade him farewell, and saw him no more. Soon after he fell asleep, just as the Sabbath passed away, and without the consciousness of dying, awoke, we humbly trust, to hear the blessed words, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord!" Having served his generation according to the will of God, he went, by a peaceful transition, from earth to heaven. As we survey his life, there is no sense of incompleteness in it. He had finished his course, and kept the faith, and

is gone from the Church below to the Church above. We mourn his departure for ourselves, but we know that it was well for him that he should go. We will enrol his name with the pious and honoured departed; be thankful that he was spared to us so long, and for the memories he has left behind: and endeavour to follow him in the onward and upward way to the Communion of Saints on high, to which there will be no interruption, for ever and ever!

CHAPTER XIII.

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HIS CHARACTER AND QUALITIES.

IF I have succeeded in giving a correct idea of the leading features of the mind and life of Mr. MADGE, the intellectual and moral characteristics by which he was distinguished as a man, and as a religious teacher, will be apparent; and it will have been seen that truthfulness, earnestness, sincerity, single-heartedness, and a genuine enthusiasm, were conspicuous in him. As a friend, he was firm and faithful. As a companion, though not what would be designated a brilliant talker, he was cheerful and agreeable, ready to take his part in conversation, and able to sustain the place which he was expected to occupy. He had always been accustomed to mingle with cultivated society, and from the office he filled, and the large measure of acceptance which his ministrations received, openings were not seldom presented to him of

intercourse with persons of considerable attainments, and of social distinction. On his settlement in London, he became a member of the "Non-Con Club," which was designed to furnish "a meeting place for men who were well qualified by their principles and accomplishments to improve and adorn the social hour;" and, occasionally, members of the House of Commons, and eminent foreigners were invited guests. The late Judge TALFOURD and Sir CHARLES A. ELTON, were original members of this club, and Sir JOHN BOWRING and M. D. HILL, Esq., Q C., are among the few that first joined it who still survive.*

It was said of JOSEPH JOHN GURNEY, that he was never known to speak disparagingly or unkindly of anyone. And when this habit proceeds from a principle of benevolence and

* This society consisted of Liberal Protestant Dissenters, and at every meeting an essay on some subject connected with Nonconformity was read. Each member presided in his turn, and was directed to give *verbatim*, at the dinner, three standing toasts:—1. The Memory of the Two Thousand; 2. JOHN MILTON; and 3. Civil and Religious Liberty all the world over. Mr. H. CRABB ROBINSON, in his diary, June 30, 1847, observes:—"Went to a Non-Con meeting held at the Star and Garter. It was a thin meeting—ten members and four visitors,—but it was agreeable. MADGE was in the chair; he said but little, but that little was good. E. TAYLOR brought with him the German composer, SPOHR—a burly man in appearance, but his conversation was lively, and he professed Liberal principles."

rectitude, it is indeed an evangelical virtue. It was one which Mr. MADGE eminently possessed. He never ridiculed the weaknesses, nor was he fond of talking of the concerns, the characters, or the imperfections of others; and always would he check, if possible, any such exhibitions in his presence, and rejoice to find something to admire, rather than to censure and condemn.

As a Christian teacher, Mr. MADGE was remarkable for the consistency of his course. It was not that he adhered to old forms because they had been long observed, and from an aversion to change. He never shrank from fresh investigation, nor was he unwilling to admit that he had been in error, when convinced that he was wrong. But his belief in Christianity, and in the Unitarian view of it, was firm and decided; and there was a striking harmony in his ministry from its commencement to its conclusion. The same consistency was perceptible in his private and public conduct. Freedom from imperfection we do not expect to find in mortal man. Who is there that can be justly said to be without fault or infirmity before God! But in all that was really a part of himself, and that should be considered in the estimate of his character,

I believe he desired, and sought to have a conscience, void of offence; that in simplicity and godly sincerity he had his conversation in the world; and that he was unstained by its follies and sins. His piety was calm and rational, but fervent and sincere. A more reverent mind, a purer soul, I have never known. As a minister of religion, his unspotted life, no doubt, gave emphasis to the eloquence of his lips. Old CHAUCER has exquisitely delineated a Christian pastor and preacher, well and fully worthy of the name, and the description may be fitly applied to the friend and brother of whom I have been writing, and whose praise is in all our Churches:—

> Though holy in himself and virtuous,
> He still to sinful man was mild and piteous:
> Not in his speech imperious or malign,
> But in his teaching soothing and benign,
> To draw them on to heaven by reason fair
> And good example, was his daily care.
> The lore of Christ and his Apostles twelve
> He taught—but first he followed it himselve.

From the kind expressions of regard and sympathy which were called forth by Mr. MADGE's death, it would be easy to select many passages that would not only be very interesting, but which would shew that the impression

of his character and qualities received by those who saw him under different circumstances is in unison with the representation which has been given in the pages of this memoir. From a few of these letters to Mrs. MADGE I have requested permission to make extracts, and these his friends will be pleased to have an opportunity of reading. The Rev. W. H. CHANNING, writing immediately after he heard of Mr. MADGE'S death, observes :—

"Youthfulness in his ardent affection, quick sensibilities, swift perceptions, poetic glow, hopefulness, elasticity, freshness—this was the first impression made upon me years ago, when, in 1836, I first had the pleasure of seeing Mr. MADGE; and this feeling of his youthfulness, so rare, so beautiful, has lingered, and been renewed till the last.

"It was on our return from a winter on the Continent, now thirty years since, that he first called upon my mother, sister, and myself. And I remember well the beaming brightness of his aspect, the tender tones of his musical voice, the graceful courtesy of his manner, his ardour, earnestness, eloquence. He talked much of WORDSWORTH, whom he had lately visited, and of the Lake district, and, as we sympathised strongly in his love of the poet, he poured out his feeling freely. We heard him preach, too, in his own pulpit, amid his large congregation, and were cheered and quickened by his loving confidence in God, hearty human kindness, and radiant enjoyment of the beauty and charm of existence.

"This was my first impression of Mr. MADGE. Since coming to England, now fourteen years and more ago, I

have learned cordially to admire his brave fidelity to his own convictions, frank truthfulness, candour, generosity, manly straightforwardness of speech and conduct. He was upright and honourable in interchanging views, even with those from whom he widely differed; lenient and tolerant in judgment even when he disapproved. As a theologian, he has left a vivid image of himself in his published writings."

The Rev. JAMES MARTINEAU, after an allusion to his last visit to Mr. MADGE, on one of the closing days of June, 1870, and to his impression on leaving him, bright and clear as he was, that it was doubtful whether he should grasp the delicate and kindly hand of his old friend again, remarks, with reference to the mode of his departure :—

"The Heavenly Father has sent the summons gently, as if to suit a spirit so gentle and trustful, and to spare those whom he loved every pang of memory beyond the inevitable pang of parting. A life more beautifully wrought out to its natural close, with its day's work brilliantly and faithfully done, and a serene evening, cheered by the love which it had so copiously earned,—it is most rare to see; not an image of it can remain anywhere that is not delightful. Such purity and simplicity of heart, such earnest depth of devout conviction, a habit of thought so clear and firm, of expression so lucid, of speech so winning, were blended in him, as to render him unique among his contemporaries. No doubt, in my case, early impressions of a very tender

and sacred kind have something to do with the affectionate veneration with which I regarded him; for some of my first awakenings of conscience and of spiritual faith came to me in the tones of that sweet voice, and the inward echoes were ever renewed when I heard it again, in preaching or in prayer. In the crises of opinion which have agitated our Churches in recent times, it has been my misfortune, from the different constitution of my mind, to find myself on a line of movement, which Mr. MADGE did not approve. But even when his conscientious resistance most nearly approached myself, never for one moment did it even suspend the old affection, though doubtless flinging into it a temporary share of pain. Here, where we can only darkly see the things Divine, these differences are the inevitable lot of earnest and truth-loving minds. He has first gained his promotion into the light which will dissolve our doubts, and show us a reality higher than our poor dreams."

The Rev. CHARLES BEARD, kindly expressing his sympathy with Mrs. MADGE in her sorrow, adds,—

"For sorrow, both deep and lasting it must be, although there is much to be thankful for. So long a life as MR. MADGE'S, so happy, so useful, so crowned with love and respect, and a quiet end at last,—what can be a greater gift of God to him or to us? And then there is the confident expectation that the parting will not be for long, and that the interrupted affections of earth, will be renewed and transfigured in the unbroken love of heaven."

The Rev. P. W. CLAYDEN, remarks :—

"It has been a great privilege to see him in his old age, so fresh and happy, so full of interest in all about him, so much of the dew of his youth still upon him. It has been a privilege, too, to see with what unfaltering courage, and what unfailing confidence, an old veteran and standard bearer in our Unitarian faith can lie down to die. . . . Mr. MADGE has done a good life's work, and has not been called home till the late evening of his days. He has come to his grave in a full age, like a shock of corn which comes in in its season."

The Rev. JOHN GORDON, having alluded to the distinguished place which Mr. MADGE occupied, and the emphatic Christianity which marked his life and labours, writes :—

"For him death is a happy release, and the entrance upon a glorious immortality; but those whom he has left behind cannot but regret that one whose goodness was so true and so great, should be taken from among us. I feel honoured when I think upon the regard with which he treated me, and his memory will always be cherished by me as among the best treasures of life."

These testimonies of respect for Mr. MADGE's character, are from ministers of his own communion; but there are two letters from clergymen of other Churches to whom he had been known, which will serve to indicate how highly he was esteemed by those from whom

in theological doctrine he widely differed. The Rev. Dr. CAPPEL, minister of the German Lutheran Church in London, wrote as soon as he heard of the decease of his old friend :—

"ST. LEONARDS-ON-SEA, *September 1st*, 1870.

"DEAR MRS. MADGE,—

"With feelings of deep sorrow and sincere sympathy have we received the sad intelligence that it has pleased God to take unto himself the dear partner of your life. Though you must long have been prepared for the change, the loss of so dear and good a man is an affliction for which no consolation can be found on earth. May the Lord in his infinite mercy be with you in the hour of trouble, and uphold and strengthen you, and even make you thankful for all the blessings which your departed husband, for so many years, has bestowed and received. I am sure you will feel it, and this thought must elevate your mind, that it is a privilege which few enjoy, to have been so closely allied, and for so lengthened period, to a man of Mr. MADGE'S qualities of heart and mind. He leaves this world in the fulness of years, sincerely lamented by all who had the happiness of knowing him. On earth he will long be remembered with honour and affection, and in heaven he enjoys even now the reward of his good and faithful stewardship. May his ashes rest in peace! Let us mourn for his departure, but as such who believe and know that our loss is his present and everlasting gain.

"I am grieved that, for several reasons, I cannot arrange it so as to accompany your revered husband to his earthly resting place. Be assured, dear Mrs. MADGE,

my thoughts and prayers will be with you on this trying day, and I fervently hope that you part from your best treasure with a calm, resigned, and grateful heart.

"Believe me, yours very sincerely,

"L. CAPPEL."

From another, a clergyman of the Church of England, for whom I have frequently heard Mr. MADGE express a very great respect, the following letter was sent :—

"SURBITON, *September* 19*th*, 1870.

"MY DEAR MRS. MADGE,—

"On my return home from the Continent, I am deeply grieved to find a letter from a friend to inform me of the departure for eternal life of your beloved husband. Although my acquaintance with him was short, yet I was at once able to detect the nobleness of his mind, and had circumstances permitted me I should have been proud to have learned from his long experience and deep thought, and I am certain I should have derived much assistance. I always regretted not being able to enjoy more of his society, the distance and my constant occupations were the barriers. The published sermons of his that I had the pleasure of reading revealed to me the deep Christian feeling of his heart, and his true appreciation of the teachings of his great Master. He had not allowed himself to be hampered with the letter that killeth, but had grasped the spirit that giveth life. A mind so developed as his, could look forward to his departure from this life with perfect calm and true peace, and I feel certain that he must have given a bright example of how a wise and good Christian can part from earthly things, even when most dear to him.

But with all this, I am sure you must deplore his loss, and miss his wise and calm presence. By degrees you have seen him approaching and preparing to leave you, and though certain that it must come to this, yet when the long anticipated separation comes, it brings its measure of sorrow. I can only say, bear it as he would wish you to bear it, and I am sure you will bear it, nobly and with Christian resignation. We must look forward to join him in a future and happy life, where the mind freed from many hindrances which surround it here, will be able to expand itself more and more to the glory of God, and to comprehend and enjoy the fulness of eternal love. Into this glorious state your husband has entered. It is a gain to him but a loss to you, but there is the hope of meeting again to calm sorrow and to help us to look forward with hope.

"With deep sympathy, believe me,

"Sincerely yours,

"JOHN S. DAWES."

Mr. MADGE was buried, according to his own direction, in the grave of his daughter, in Abney Park Cemetery, on Saturday, Sept. 3, 1870. The funeral was intended to be strictly private, but all his brother ministers who were in London at the time,—the Rev. W. H. CHANNING, the Rev. H. IERSON, Rev. T. L. MARSHALL, Rev. R. SPEARS, accompanied the family,—and many of his old friends attended the service, which was conducted by the Rev. WILLIAM JAMES, of Bristol, who also preached

a funeral sermon at the Free Church, Kentish Town, to a large congregation, from John xiv., 1, 2, 3.*

On the marble stone which covers the tomb is inscribed—

The Rev. THOMAS MADGE,
Died August 29, 1870,
Aged Eighty-three years.
Minister of Essex Street Chapel
Thirty-four years.

Resolutions expressive of sympathy with Mrs. MADGE and her daughter, of the value of Mr. MADGE'S long and faithful services, and of respect for his character, were conveyed to Mrs. MADGE by the Rev. R. SPEARS, Secretary of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association; the Rev. E. KELL, Secretary of the Southern Unitarian Association; by the Committees of the Western Book and Tract Society, and the Western Unitarian and Free Church Christian Union; and from the Protestant Dissenting Ministers of Warwickshire and the neighbouring counties, by the Rev. JOHN GORDON.

* Other funeral sermons were preached in the London Unitarian Chapels; and at Swansea by the Rev. E. HIGGINSON, at Evesham by the Rev. JOHN GORDON, at Southampton by the Rev. E. KELL, M.A., and at many other places in the country.

Mr. MADGE had the pleasure of being acquainted with the well-known French preacher, ATHANASE COQUEREL, one of the most eminent pulpit orators of the present century; and his hardly less celebrated and accomplished son, who bears his father's name, thus alludes to Mr. MADGE, in his paper, 'Le Lien, Journal Des Eglises Reformées de France:'—"Les Eglises Unitaires de la Grande Bretagne ont perdu un de leurs anciens pasteurs les plus aimés et les plus vénérés, le Rév. M. MADGE. Nous attendions pour annoncer cette mort, de pouvoir donner ici quelques dètails sur la longue carriére de dévouement de ce digne et excellent pasteur. Malheureusement, les journaux étrangers ne nous parvenant plus, nous manquons de renseignements et nous nous bornons á offrir ici un tribut de vénération et de regret á la mémoire d' un homme qui a répandu sans cesse autour de lui les lumiéres les plus pures et dont la parole trés—écoutée avait un caractére particuliérement touchant et éleve."

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THE SALVATION OF MAN BY THE FREE GRACE OF GOD, ASSERTED AND VINDICATED.—A sermon preached at Norwich. 8vo. 1812.

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THREE LETTERS TO THE REV. ROBERT WALPOLE ON THE IMPROVED VERSION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT, IN REPLY TO HIS LETTER ON THAT SUBJECT ADDRESSED TO THE AUTHOR.—Norwich, 1813.

THE TRUTH AND VALUE OF THE UNITARIAN DOCTRINE.—A sermon preached at the Old Meeting in Yarmouth, on Thursday, July 21, 1814, before the members of the Eastern Unitarian Society. London, 1814.

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A VINDICATION OF THE PRINCIPLE AND OBJECTS OF THE UNITARIAN FUND.—A sermon preached at the Unitarian Chapel in Artillery Lane, London, on Wednesday, May 17, 1815, before the Supporters of the Unitarian Fund.—London, 1815.

THE CHARACTER OF GEORGE THE THIRD, AND THE CHARACTER OF HIS REIGN, CONSIDERED SEPARATELY. — A sermon preached at the Octagon Chapel, Norwich, on Wednesday, February, 16, 1820, the day of the interment of his late Majesty. To which is annexed THE CONCLUSION OF A DISCOURSE FORMERLY DELIVERED ON OCCASION OF THE DEATH OF THE PRINCESS CHARLOTTE. Norwich, 1820.

REASONS FOR PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING TO GOD.—A sermon preached on the opening of the Unitarian Chapel at Diss, in Norfolk, June 22, 1822. London, 1822.

A SERMON ON OCCASION OF THE DEATH OF THE REV. THOMAS BELSHAM, preached at the Chapel in Essex Street, November 22, 1829, and published at the request of the Trustees and Congregation. London, 1829.

TWO DISCOURSES ON THE UNION BETWEEN GOD AND CHRIST, AND THE GROUNDS OF UNITARIAN NONCONFORMITY TO THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, WITH A PREFATORY ADDRESS TO UNITARIANS. London, 1835.

MEANS OF IMPROVING THE CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE; represented in a sermon preached before the friends and supporters of the Domestic Mission in the Chapel in Jewin Street, London, on Thursday, June 20, 1839.

A DISCOURSE ON OCCASION OF THE DEATH OF THE REV. WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING, D.D.—Delivered in Essex Street Chapel, on Sunday, November 6, 1842. London, 1842.

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ON THE BOND OF UNION IN THE CHURCHES OF UNITARIAN CHRISTIANS.—A discourse preached June 28, 1849, in the Octagon Chapel, Norwich, before the Eastern Unitarian Society. London, 1849.

THE DEDICATION OF THE CHRISTIAN TEMPLE TO THE WORSHIP AND SERVICE OF GOD.—A sermon preached on Thursday, October 18, 1849. London, 1849.

ONE GOD THE FATHER, THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST AND HIS APOSTLES.—A discourse preached in Little Portland Street Chapel, June 2, 1852, before the British and Foreign Unitarian Association London, 1852.

CHRIST THE FOUNDATION.—A sermon preached on Sunday, May 11, 1856, at the Octagon Chapel, Norwich, in Commemoration of the Hundredth Year from the date of its opening. London, 1856.

CHRISTIANITY A MESSAGE OF GOOD TIDINGS. — A sermon preached in Essex Street Chapel, on Sunday, March 27, 1859, on the Completion there of a Ministry of Thirty-Four Years. London, 1859

THE IMMUTABLE NATURE OF CHRISTIAN TRUTH.—A sermon preached on New Year's Day, 1862, at the Dedication of the Church of the Messiah, Birmingham. London, 1862.

SERMON ON OPENING UNITY CHURCH, Islington, 1862.

THE RELATION OF MIRACLES TO CHRISTIANITY.—A Lecture delivered at Essex Street Chapel, and Hackney Unitarian Church, in the months of May and June, 1865. London, 1865.

PRAYERS FOR MORNING AND EVENING; to which are added, GENERAL PRAYERS FOR EITHER OCCASION. London, 1866.

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THE IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION TO THE POOR STATED, AND THE PROMOTION OF IT RECOMMENDED AS AN OBJECT OF CHRISTIAN BENEVOLENCE.—A sermon preached at Bury St. Edmunds for the benefit of a Charity School. 8vo. 1810. Printed but not published.

SELF-EXAMINATION, AN AID TO VIRTUE AND PIETY. Printed but not published.

MR. MADGE also edited "THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER REFORMED;" together with Selections from the Psalms of David as used in Essex Street Chapel; and Hymns for Public Worship; selected for the use of the congregation. 1849.

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